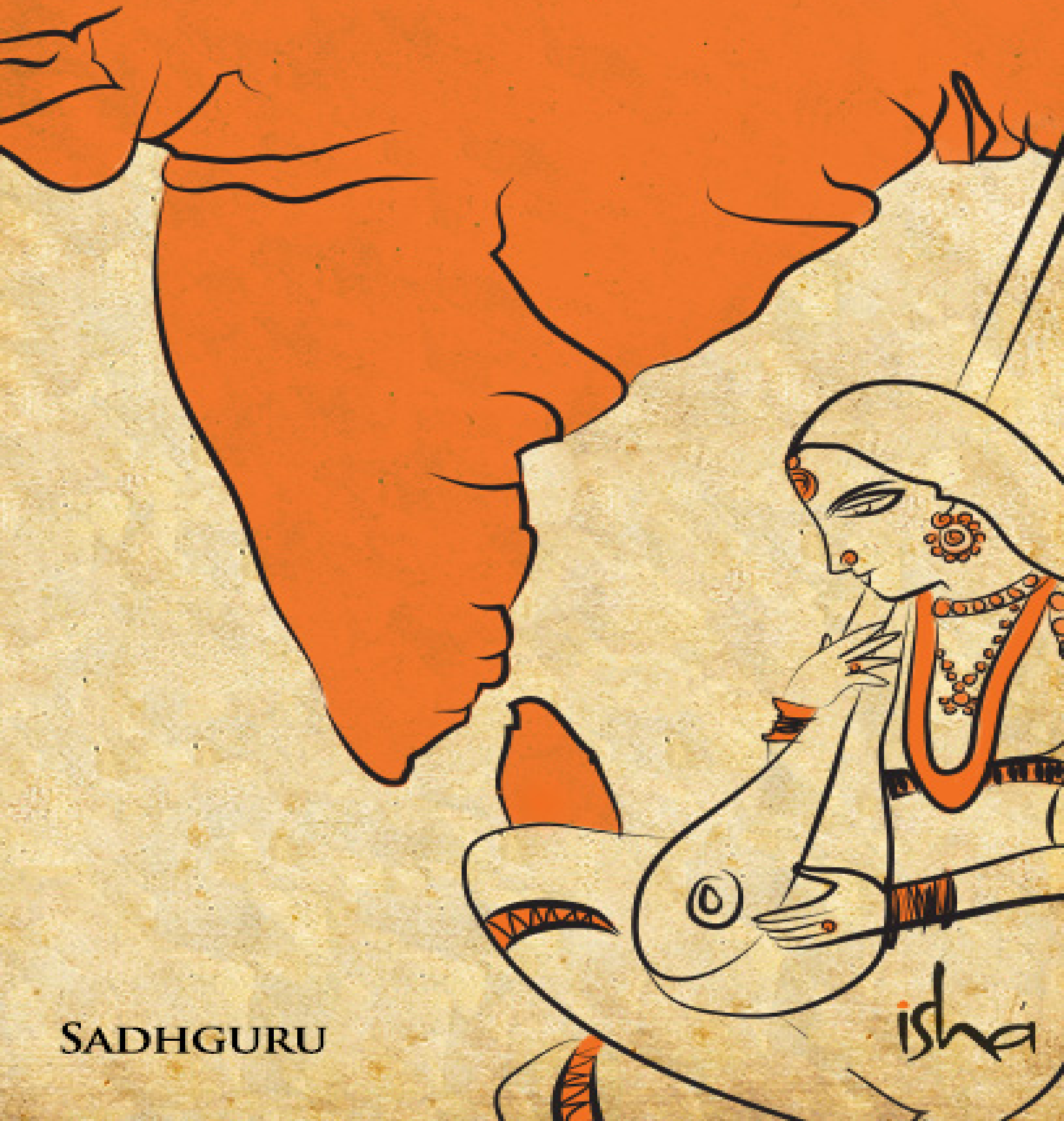
BHA·RA·TA

The Rhythm of a Nation



SADHGURU

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Bha-ra-ta: The Rhythm of a Nation
Sadhguru

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Introduction

For thousands of years, though we have been multiple political entities within the Indian subcontinent, we were always recognized as one nation, within this land and in the rest of the known world. This is because of a unique cultural and spiritual ethos. Nations are made and held together on the basis of race, religion, language or ethnicity. We are a colorful combination of all this and more. Sameness is the formula of nation building, but Bharat stands in defiance of this mediocrity. This culture is the most complex and colorful culture on the planet. The way people look, their language, their food, their way of dressing, and their music and dance – everything changes every fifty or hundred kilometers in this country.

Even today, we have not lost the original cultural and spiritual thread that kept this very diverse population together for thousands of years. After being under some kind of invasion for over 1100 years, this is the only massive population which has kept its original roots alive – not in an archival way but in a living way. There has been a certain basic ethos and a sense of awareness and wisdom to this mass of people, which is very hard to find anywhere else. You may find it in individual people, but a large mass of people having a certain unconscious awareness of many aspects of life is not present anywhere else in the world.

Every aspect of this nation and the making of this nation has been unique in identity and process. Even when we managed to send the British away, it happened in a unique

way – thanks to Mahatma Gandhi. The well-entrenched administration of the imperialist power was removed without armed revolution or battle.

In addition, just before this nation's independence in 1947, the British went through the throes of World War II, which was a tremendous hit to their own existence and culture. During this time, as well as earlier on in World War I, hundreds of thousands of Indian soldiers fought alongside the British. At the same time, we were fighting for our own nation's freedom in a peaceful manner on the streets. This is a phenomenon unknown anywhere – that you could protest against your enemy at home, but at the same time, fight alongside him elsewhere. We're crazy, but it is this madness that makes us unique. We always held what is right above our own wellbeing. Everyone in the world thought this was crazy but no one knew how to deal with it.

This is true even today. This is a nation where a large population will give up everything a person normally aspires for – all pleasures of life, all comforts, all rights – to simply live in pursuit of what is ultimately right. It is because of this spiritual ethos that even our independence struggle had a unique streak, which many others tried to emulate later on in many parts of the world.

This conundrum that we call as "India" today is a very organic and conscious mess. Everything seems to be wrong, yet everything manages to happen!We are not a manicured garden. We are like a forest. It is because of this organic nature of our existence that invaders, who came in waves through the last millennium, did not know how to deal with

us. They could not figure out what they could destroy in us to destroy our identity, because it is not any one thing; it is too complex. This complexity is *the* most fantastic thing humanity has created, because it breeds a completely different dimension of humanity. It is just that we have to master it to produce results.

With all its apparent disorganization, this culture used to be very organized deep down. It functioned very systematically. Even today, the nation has not broken down completely, simply because of that deep in-built cultural organization. With all the surface disharmony, there is something deeper which is holding things together. I don't believe it is the government or the law or the infrastructure. Somewhere, there is something in people which still keeps things rolling. We know how to create a very organized chaos. That is what this country is.

People who think in a structured manner cannot understand the possibility of the chaos. One who is the product of a manicured garden would think the forest is chaotic. A garden needs constant tending. If you do not tend to it for a few months, it's gone. But a forest has been there for millions of years, and it will continue to be there. This is the strength of complexity that one nurtures around them. If you get frustrated with complexity, you will try to simplify it. If you simplify it, you will produce simpletons who need a laboratory atmosphere to live. Today, we have produced societies and human beings like this – if they breathe, they will die. They need to breathe from a cylinder, not from the

atmosphere. This is an extreme result of over-structuring human existence.

I am not trying to eulogize a whole lot of mess this country needs to clean up. The beauty of our culture is that it is disorganized, but if you do not find harmony in the disorganization, then a disharmonious mind, a disharmonious body, and a disharmonious social situation takes away all possibilities from a human being. But there is a fundamental structure that should never be destroyed, which is so complex and seems chaotic, unless you have a different way of looking at it.

The spiritual paths in this culture lived totally disorganized because they did not want anything to be suppressed. Right now, we do not have enough space in the country to be too disorganized. If you want to be totally disorganized, if it was just one person per square kilometer, you could act crazy. But when there are this many people, how you keep every step matters. With the kind of population and spaces available around us, I think a little more organization would make life much more saner than what it is right now, because if you allow too much life to happen, things will collapse.

As a country and as a people, this nation is living too far below its potential. Wherever I travel, whatever kinds of groups of people I meet, including top-level scientists, academics and students at very prestigious universities, and various other kinds of people, I always find that the groups I meet in Bharat are far sharper and smarter than most people anywhere else in the world. However, though the

level of intelligence is high, their ability to use it seems to be very low because of a disorganized attitude and situation. So, it is important to just maintain that balance, allowing enough freedom for life to happen freely, but still be organized enough so that you do not waste the fundamental human potential within yourself.

Today, the rest of the world is looking towards this nation as the greatest economic possibility on the planet. I hope we won't disappoint them. How effectively we fulfill this expectation from the rest of the world depends on all of us, how we shape up and what we do to enjoy the mess we have created, but also to make the mess work. In many ways, we are at a crossroads. But we have always been at a crossroads. It is not new. We don't believe in taking a highway. We believe in taking all the roads. If ten of us go to a crossroads, if there are ten possibilities, each one of us takes our own path. That may look like we are not going anywhere, but that is not true.

A few years ago, there was a campaign by the Confederation of Indian Industry at the World Economic Forum called "India Everywhere." That's how it is: India everywhere! It is not in one place. It is not in one principle or ideology. It is simply everywhere because it is just like nature. This cannot be crafted in a short period of time. It is because we have had a few thousand years of existence that such a complex, organic mess has happened. It is a mess only for those who look at it with a simplistic mindset. Otherwise, it is a tremendous possibility. Whether we will

leave it as a mess, or transform it into a tremendous possibility is the question.

The Power of a Name

Sadhguru and Kiran Bedi, during the recent "In Conversations with the Mystic", explore the science behind Bharat – India's original name – and how this culture was carefully crafted for people's wellbeing.

Kiran Bedi: Sadhguru, we just heard about "Vande Mataram". Why do we call our country *Mataram*, not *Patram*? Why is it "motherland," not "fatherland," or both?

Sadhguru: Because, though essentially a nation is the people, the boundaries and definition of a nation come from a land. We have always seen land or earth as a mother, because if we sow a seed, life grows. Almost everywhere in the world, except in certain very martial cultures, a nation has always been seen as a woman or a mother, because in a certain sense, a nation is defined by an aspect of geography.

Kiran Bedi: Is that the only reason? When did it begin?

Sadhguru: I would say it began with this nation, because this is the oldest nation on the planet. It defies today's concept of a nation. We are different people, but we are fine together. That is the nature of this country. That is what has to be encouraged.

When the Europeans came here, they did not understand how this could be one nation if there is nothing binding it. What is it that makes this nation? This is something that the leadership and the people of this country must really look at. It is not language. It is not religion. It is not race. Nationhood predates all religion. When there was no religion, this nation was. We called

the land between the Himalayas and the Indu Sarovar (Indian Ocean) “Hindustan”, only as a geographical description – not to represent a particular religion. This is not a religious identity, this is a geographical and cultural identity.

What kept us together longer than any other nation on the planet is essentially that we have always been a land of seekers – seekers of truth and liberation. In this seeking, we found oneness. When we look for sameness, we try to become a land of believers.

This seeking is not something we invented. It is the nature of human intelligence to want to know, realize, and liberate itself. This nation was based on the foundation that we are seekers. As a seeker, you are not aligned to a particular thing on the outside but to the life process within you, and that never goes wrong.

No matter how badly you contaminate human beings with belief systems and brainwash them, once their survival is taken care of, they always want to know the nature of their existence, and of everything around them. Whether you call it science, spiritual process, inquiry or quest – essentially, human intelligence wants to transcend its present limitations and liberate itself from the fetters in which we exist right now.

We built our nation on this longing, this seeking. Our nationhood cannot be destroyed as long as we keep this seeking alive. If we do not try to transform ourselves towards sameness, we will always be one.

Kiran Bedi: Then, was that Bharata? Is India different? Has India changed and changed the Bharata?

Sadhguru: Bharat means *bha – ra – ta*. *Bhava* means sensation. Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching are different types of sensations. Your whole experience of life is

sensory right now. Or, in other words, sensations are the basis of your experience. *Bha* means sensation, out of which emotion arises. *Ra* means *raga*, or the tune. The tune is not yours, existence has already set it. Now you have to find the rhythm, which is the *tala*. If you find the right rhythm, you are a fantastic human being. If you miss the rhythm, you get crushed by the process of life.

We called this nation Bharata, and one of the great kings of the past was Bharata. People say the country is named after him, but actually, he was named after the country. There are so many Bharats and Bharatis in this country – they are named after this nation. King Bharata had nine sons, but when the time to hand over the empire came, he gave it to Bhumanyu, who was the son of sage Bharadwaj. This boy had grown up in the forest. When he came to the court one day, the king looked at him and said, “This boy must become the king – not my sons.” People were shocked because the emperor’s sons – nine of them – were waiting in a queue, probably fighting with each other over who would become the king. People argued, “Who is he? He has grown up in the forest.” Bharata said, “I see an enormous intelligence in his eyes and a raging fire in his heart. He is able-bodied and stable. He should be the king.” This was the first demonstration of democracy in this nation, thousands of years ago. I hope we follow this example today.

Kiran Bedi: Did we make a mistake in converting our name from Bharat to India?

Sadhguru: A serious mistake. Whenever somebody occupies a nation, the first thing they will do is change your name. This is the technology of dominance, this is the technology of enslaving. If you look at African-American history, when the African people were brought to America, the first thing

they did was take their African name away and gave them some silly name. That is what has been done to us – Thiruvananthapuram is “Trivandrum,” Chennai is “Madras” – we don’t know whether we are mad or we are rascals! Like this – “India.” What does it mean? It does not mean anything. If I give you a meaningless name, you will become a meaningless, stupid person in front of me because I have a meaningful name, I have a tradition, I have a culture – you have nothing. So in that context, we have become “India.”

The concept of a nation must sink into everyone’s mind because a nation is just an idea. When this idea burns through your mind and sinks into your heart, and your passion rises, you have a real nation. Otherwise, “nation” is just on paper. This is the unfortunate reality for us right now.

When the British left in 1947, the first thing we should have done is change the name in such a way that it resonates in everyone’s mind. You are using an English name for an Indian nation. Hardly a few percent of us can speak English properly in this country. The remaining are essentially left out. One thing I would like to request of the present Prime Minister is that we rename this country in a way that reverberates in everyone’s heart.

I know a whole lot of the intellectual crowd will say, “What is in a name?” Okay, then call yourself Tobu, or Momo! People are doing that! I am not against anything. All I am saying is, when you utter your name, the meaning is only psychological and social, but the sound is existential and has a power. “Bharat” has power. This power has to reverberate through everyone’s hearts in this country. And the idea of what it means to be an Indian – the fundamental – must get across to every human being

because if everyone's aspiration is not the same as the national aspiration, then you don't have a nation.

Kiran Bedi: If we had continued to call India "Bharata," would a woman have felt more secure than in India today? You know what is happening with women, particularly in the rural and weaker sections of society.

Sadhguru: It is not that the name will do everything, but the name has to inspire passion for the nation. Right now, they only have hormonal passions – there is no passion for the nation. That is why these things are happening to women.

A nation is important because you expand the scope of your passion, involvement, and concern beyond your own likes and dislikes. You may ask, "Why can't we think about the whole world?" As a spiritual being, I am not a nationalistic person. I would like to look at every human being and every creature on the planet in the same way – that is how I am. But a nation is the largest piece of humanity that you are able to be committed to right now. When you are committed to this nation and its wellbeing, if not to 7.2 billion people, at least you are committed to 1.2 billion people, which is a great step forward from being committed to your own personal wellbeing.

Kiran Bedi: I think in the last ten days (refers to the recent change of government with Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister of India), Hindi has returned much more. We might hear "*bharatvasi*" (one who lives in Bharat) and "*bharatiya*" (of or relating to Bharat) much more.

Sadhguru: You are leaving us out – we are from the South.

Kiran Bedi: You learn a little bit of Hindi then.

Sadhguru: No, we won't.

Kiran Bedi: Why?

Sadhguru: Because it is not the sameness that holds us together. We are different people, but we are fine together. That is the nature of this country. That is what has to be encouraged. Don't try to teach everyone Hindi. Don't try to teach everyone Tamil. I speak Tamil, you speak Hindi. You eat *paratha*, I eat *idli*. I think this is the best thing, you think that is the best thing. Still we have no issues. In the same family, five people can worship five different gods in the same room – no problem!

Kiran Bedi: When you analyze the making of an organization, one of the first few things we do is a SWOT analysis. We do strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. What is the SWOT analysis of Bharat?

Sadhguru: I would bring it down further to an individual. What is needed to build a successful individual? The same things are needed to build a successful nation. It is not any different. If one knows how to build a successful human being of himself in every way – when I say successful, it is not just that you made money or got elected – a successful human being means you are complete in every way. If you make this, the same replica is for the nation – in the sense that if you want to be a good human being, all your four limbs should be limbered up and strong to start with.

The four limbs of a nation are the executive, the judiciary, the military and the civil services – all of them must be limbered up and agile. We must do some yoga with all of them! We must knead them. When you have pain in your limbs, you will wish you did not have those limbs. That is what is happening right now. Many times we wish we did not have them because they have become such a pain. Keeping them limbered up is very important. And, a nation will be successful only when people's

aspirations are kept alive. If people lose their aspiration, the nation is finished.

There must be enormous aspiration and people should see a piece of the sky. They must see it is a possibility, not an empty dream. If it becomes an empty dream, they will go to hallucinogenic drugs. They must always see a piece of the sky that is worth making the effort for. It is very important to nurture an aspiration and to create the possibility that you can get there within your lifespan.

Another thing is to have a strategic sense as to where we are and not live in a utopian idea of wellbeing, which we have unfortunately done. For example, we have been trading with the rest of the world for thousands of years. Wherever you go, there are stories of Indian traders. So many thousands of years ago, Aleppo City in Syria, which was one of the most beautiful cities at one time, was built on taxes the Indian traders paid.

I was fortunate enough to visit this city a little more than three years ago. It is over 7000 years old, but still full-fledged and with people living there, though the city is in rubble right now because of war. This and a few other cities were taxation cities for Indian traders. Initially, they robbed them, but when they realized that these traders were coming in such a continuous stream, they decided to tax them – which was better because they would come back again. Is there any such story in India?

In the same way, in Lebanon, there is a place called Baalbek, where there is a Phoenician temple a few thousand years old. It is a huge, massive temple where some of the foundation stones weigh three hundred tons. Indian engineers of that time transported it up the mountain and built this. There are sculpted lotus flowers hanging from the ceiling. Obviously there are no

lotuses in Lebanon, it was sculpted by Indian sculptors. And above all, in the museum at Baalbek, there is a stone with 16 corners called a Guru Pooja stone.

The Guru Pooja stone, now at the Baalbek museum.

Guru Pooja is not just an emotional thing, it is a whole system of creating a certain possibility, of creating a field of energy around you so that people become receptive and are drawn to the whole process. This is called *Shodashopachara*, which means 16 ways of treating a Guru. For this, 16-cornered stones are made which are called Guru Pooja Peetas which are unique to yogic culture. Guru Pooja stones of 16 corners could not have gone anywhere else except from this land. Such a thing exists nowhere else on the planet, but in Baalbek there is a Guru Pooja stone that is thousands of years old. Obviously there was a very active commercial and spiritual connection between the two lands.

Over a thousand years ago, Tamil kings went to Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom. If you look at these works that were created,

you will feel proud of being human. Angkor Thom is the largest religious building on the planet. Does any Tamil child in Tamil Nadu read a line about it in his textbook? No.

When you don't build pride, how do you build a nation? If you are not proud of who you are, why the hell should you stay here? Right now if the western countries open up their visa policy, eighty percent of Indians will swim across the oceans and go away! That means you are holding them by force, it is a prison. That is not the way to run a nation. People should want to be here.

Kiran Bedi: So is that our main weakness? Rootless people who don't understand their roots, they don't understand their culture.

Sadhguru: They are not rootless people. They know their roots but they are a little ashamed of their roots. The people who occupied us for so long somehow managed to bring a certain sense of shame about our roots, which has to go. As a land, as a people, what are we good at? Have we been good at something? As far as most people in this nation know, we have been occupied for a thousand years. We have been looted, raped, robbed – this is what we have done. That's not good.

We have to educate our children to show that we have done tremendous things. Just 250 years ago, we were the largest economy. The whole of Europe was thirsting to come to India, and even when they went to America, they called people there Indians because they were all aspiring to come to this place. It was the wealthiest nation, it was the most knowledgeable country, and the best place to be. Everyone wanted to be here.

Kiran Bedi: Who should teach our youngsters these things?

Sadhguru: These things have not been taught because our history has been written by the English. History is written like this to dominate you.

Kiran Bedi: No, but it is no longer English writers, it is Indian writers.

Sadhguru: But their brains are in Greenwich Mean Time! I see on the news channels, so many people keep saying, “I was in Cambridge, where were you?” “I was in Oxford.” This is their pride. Only now I see people who studied locally seem to be somewhere.

Recently, I was in Hyderabad and a journalist wanted to interview me. She was telling me that a university in the UK made a study on the vibrations of the Sun, and they measured that these vibrations are exactly the same vibrations that will happen when you utter the sound AUM. She said, “Sadhguru, you must say this.” I said, “I am not going to say this. I have been telling you for thirty years, many yogis and mystics have been telling you for thousands of years, and it’s not valuable, but a university in the UK tells you and it becomes valuable! I don’t need authentication.” Just look at me. It has worked one hundred percent.

Everything that we do – the sciences of this nation, the essential aspect of what this *samskriti* is – has worked brilliantly well for us for thousands of years, and we know it works; we don’t need any authentication. But right now we have created a world where it has to be authenticated by the West. Even the yoga that many people are doing here is only a rebound from the American coast. There are people who believe yoga was invented by Madonna!

Kiran Bedi: Let’s come to the opportunities. What opportunities does the nation have today in nation building with 1.2 billion people?

Sadhguru: This nation is a tremendous opportunity, a possibility. This is something that anyone who looks at this nation closely enough can clearly see. But what we need to understand is, between a possibility and a reality, there is a distance. Do you have the courage, the commitment and the conviction to walk the distance? That’s always the question. We are sitting on the threshold, but do not underestimate our ability to goof things up. I see it every day. The way we drive on the street, the way we do things, the way everything is made – we have a phenomenal ability to goof up things because we are too much genius with very little organization. Everyone thinks he is a genius!

I have driven across the country on my motorcycle and sat in *dhabas* and teashops so much, and one thing I have seen is – the guy who is making the tea there will be telling you how Tendulkar should have played the right shot, how his technique is not good, how he is going for a wrong approach. He will be talking about how the Prime Minister should have run the country differently. The only problem with this guy is he does not know how to make good tea!

We are too exuberant. A society like this is generally considered a high-context society – too much context, not enough content. It is a very beautiful way to exist on one level, but if we do not organize, if we do not focus this natural exuberance and free-wheeling intelligence, you will have a very chaotic situation that seems to be going somewhere but will not go anywhere. It is like a whirlwind making its own rounds. It

needs a little forceful engagement of pushing it in a certain direction, a little authority to push it.

A whirlwind is a fantastic thing because it is powered by itself. People don't understand what powers India. It is powered by itself. It is just like a whirlwind, but you must be able to direct it in the direction that you want it to go. That needs a little bit of authority, but we have picked up all kinds of fancy ideas, and we don't like any kind of authority. We would like to go all over the place. Just see – driving on the street is a clear demo.

Kiran Bedi: This time's election (2014) has asked for clarity of leadership. Undoubtedly, the kind of majority that has been given is to deliver with decisiveness. You call it authoritarianism or you can call it decisiveness, I think that is a choice.

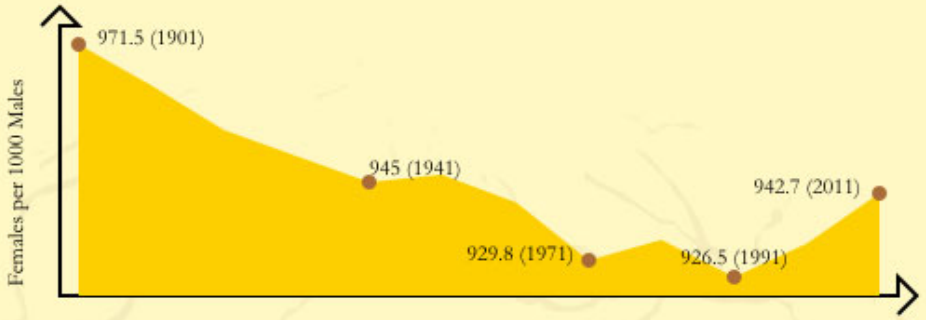
Sadhguru: I am not talking about authoritarianism. A certain authority which organizes this whirlwind of chaos is needed for this country, to push it in one direction. Otherwise we will keep going round and round. We have been sitting on a threshold for too long. For me, the economic development that everyone is talking about is not about how you can transform your life from Maruti to Mercedes. I am not against cars, I like them, but that is not the thing.

What matters to me is there are 600 million people in this country who hardly have a human existence. Today night, when we go wherever we go, there will be a choice of dinner at the table at which we sit. There are 600 million people who will have no such choice tonight. The child who has to go to school tomorrow is not eating what is necessary for him to remember anything he studies. He doesn't care a damn because he has not eaten right. The woman who carries a child in her womb doesn't have the necessary nourishment to bring out something that is worthwhile. A man who goes to the field tomorrow doesn't have

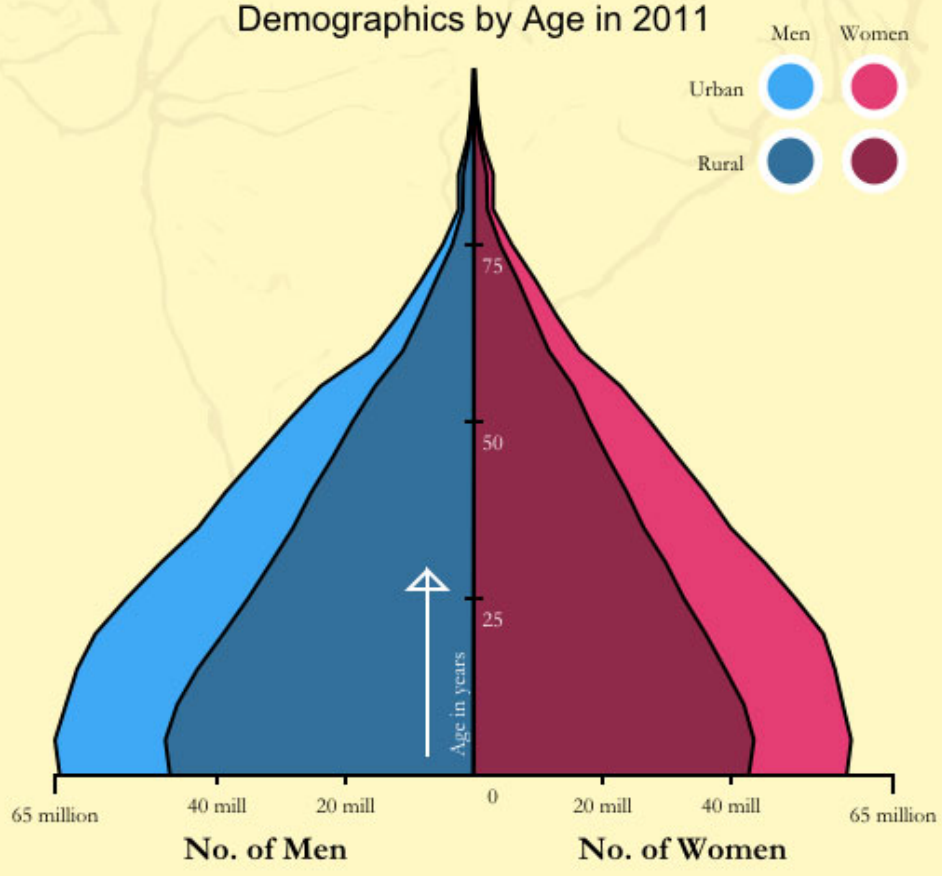
the necessary nourishment to do the right work. The cattle that he handles, the beast that ploughs the land is better fed than him. This can change in the next five to eight years’ time if we handle things right, and it matters that we handle this right.

India's Demographics

Gender Ratio Trend (1901-2011)



Demographics by Age in 2011



Source: www.un.org/en/development/desa/population, www.censusindia.gov.in

Kiran Bedi: You really combined the opportunity with the threat because the same population, the same energy, could be a threat if we goof up. Is there any threat other than this?

Sadhguru: This is the biggest threat for India. This happened in the World Economic Forum – our people, particularly the corporate and government people – were talking about how we are the youngest nation in the world. I think everybody is repeating this chant. This was going on during a discussion in the India meeting there. I sat through this and I was amazed that everyone is gloating about being the youngest nation. So I asked them, “What happened to the old people?” They said, “What? No, no we are the youngest nation.” I said, “That’s okay, but what happened to the old people?”

I want you to know, in India no one gets old, people die young. That is why we are the youngest nation in the world! It is a tragedy that we don’t have old people. If there are lots of old people, that means everyone is healthy, eating well, and living well. That is why there are lots of old people. If there are only children, that means you are reproducing but no one is living to their full life expectancy. And we are proud of that unfortunately!

Right now, we are saying sixty percent of the population is below 30, and we are very proud. But tomorrow, if we find sixty percent of the population is below 15, something wrong has happened, isn’t it? Why are we not looking at it? We have not run it properly. Why don’t we see that people are not growing old? My great-grandmother lived to be 113. No one is living like that anymore. Everyone is dying in their fifties and sixties, or even less.

We must understand why we are the youngest nation, but this tragedy can be turned into a tremendous possibility right now. We have the opportunity to power ourselves into wellbeing.

We have the synergy of youth. Or in other words, if you really look at it – though our poets eulogize many things about the country – I want you to understand, the only thing that you have is people. If you have this population educated, focused, balanced and inspired, we are a miracle. If you leave them uneducated, unfocused, uninspired and unskilled, we are the biggest disaster waiting.

Kiran Bedi: Do we need money for this?

Sadhguru: We have the money. We have not had a determined leadership. What has been lacking is leadership. I am not somebody who takes any political stance, but just looking back, if you leave the first twenty-five years after independence when they did whatever best they could do with the little that they had, after the passing of Jawaharlal Nehru, we have not really had a Prime Minister – except for Lal Bahadur Shastri, for a short period, and maybe Narasimha Rao, for a little period, during which the government was tottering constantly. The rest of the time, someone became a Prime Minister only because someone died and Indian emotion – like a cinema – overtook everyone and someone's daughter or son became the Prime Minister. We never really had someone who has roots in the nation, who knows what this country is and who is burning with aspiration to make this nation something. We never had that. It is only by default that people became Prime Ministers in this country.

Kiran Bedi: But don't the leaders come from within the community, within the people? Look at what is happening in some states today. The leadership was elected with overwhelming acceptance, but look at the present situation. I am not saying it has gone wrong or right but aren't people responsible for it?

Sadhguru: We are a democracy in paper but our mindset is essentially feudalistic. Suppose our present prime minister does really well tomorrow, people will cry “We wish he had a son because when he goes, his son could become the Prime Minister.”

When you are feudalistic, things are run in a certain way. Being feudalistic means who your father was matters. A democracy means I don’t care a damn who your father was. I don’t want to know. I don’t want to know who Mahatma Gandhi’s father is. We bow down to him for who he is and that is all that matters to us. That is how it should be in a democratic nation. I don’t care who your father was. I only care who you are.

Kiran Bedi: Sadhguru we have talked about the SWOT – the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Where do we begin? How do we start? Where do we all fall in place?

Sadhguru: I think a time has come where our identity has to be cultural because culture is inclusive. This is something we must understand. The greatness of this nation is in pursuit and accomplishment of spiritual dimensions. It is this spiritual thread which is holding the country together – this longing to know. If you hack it, then you cannot maintain the sovereignty of this country, believe me.

Kiran Bedi: Is it religion?

Sadhguru: It is not religion. What we call as “Bharat” predates all religion. In the yogic culture, Shiva is not seen as a God, he is the Adiyogi – the first yogi. When Adiyogi was asked by the seven sages, his first seven disciples who are celebrated today as the Saptarishis, “In how many ways can we attain,” he said, “If you use your physical body as a foundation, there are 112 ways of realizing the divine. But if you transcend the

physical body, then there are as many doorways as there are atoms in the universe.” Do you call this a religion?

Kiran Bedi: No.

Sadhguru: Religion means you believe “This is it.” And unfortunately, a lot of religious teachings do not believe in nationhood. They do not believe in the fundamental existence of a nation. This is not about going with somebody or for somebody. First of all, we must decide – are we a nation? If we are, the idea of nation should be burnt into everyone’s head.

Kiran Bedi: Where do we begin?

Sadhguru: Schooling, of course.

Kiran Bedi: With the teachers who have no general knowledge?

Sadhguru: You can train them in a summer.

Kiran Bedi: Who trains them?

Sadhguru: This is what needs determination in the leadership. I must tell you this. This is a fantastic thing. Someone gifted me a 1920s US government poster many years ago. In the 1920s, in the United States of America, a whole lot of Italians were moving to the United States. They spoke their own language, they ate their own food, they were among themselves and would not mix with the so-called American culture, because they thought their culture was richer. So the US government did something amazing, which I am sure a whole lot of intellectuals today will brand as fascist, though they are all queuing up to go to the United States. The US government made posters: for Germans, one kind of poster, for Italians, one kind of poster, for Jewish people, another kind of poster. Within the kitchen of every home, this poster was supposed to be fixed. It had instructions

as to how a housewife should serve an American breakfast every day in the morning, how she should be dressed, how the table should be set, what should be for breakfast. For lunch and dinner, you can eat Italian but the breakfast should be American. This may sound fascist…

Kiran Bedi: Yes

Sadhguru: …but it is with this that they integrated different communities. The government looked into even something so small as what you are eating for breakfast, because they are interested in making a nation.

I was amazed to see that someone went into such elaborateness of putting people together. If you had left them like that they would all be separate nations within a nation, fighting each other. Whatever said and done, America is such a melting pot, but one nation.

The idea of a nation has still not sunk into people's minds and hearts in this country. We have not done anything focused to build this. Sometime ago, I was speaking to some students, and a fourteen-year-old boy told me he wanted to enter the government's most corrupt department so that he can make good money! He doesn't even think it's wrong, he thinks that's the way to make your life. This is a country where sixty-five years ago, during the freedom struggle, people threw their lives on the street. In just one generation, a high school boy says he wants to enter the most corrupt government department. This is a disgrace and a huge drop in our integrity level. People think, "Why bother about these things, I'll take care of myself." That's not how life works. Unless our society and country are doing well, we won't do well, no matter how capable we are individually.

It has become like this today because we have not taken care of certain things. Keeping India as one nation is going to be a big challenge when economic prosperity happens, because we have still not knitted the country as one. When people are poor they will somehow stick together, but once affluence comes, divisions will invariably happen if we do not develop a certain integration of the nation through a cultural ethos.

Kiran Bedi: Give me one point which unites this country in this way. Have you one idea? Other than Vande Mataram. Even Vande Mataram – half the people don't sing. They don't want to sing.

Sadhguru: You can't force me to eat paratha okay?

Kiran Bedi: But give us one idea – one idea to the government, one idea to the people from the grassroots.

Sadhguru: One important thing we need to look at is that, right now, the economy has become the subject of conversation everywhere. This is an imitation of the West. You never heard such a thing twenty years ago. No one sat at a restaurant and discussed economy. It is only now that everyone is doing this, though most people don't know how it works. If you want to be in the loop, you must talk about economy!

Economy simply means our aspiration of how we want to live. This aspiration is right now hugely imported. We want to live like the average American lives. The Living Earth report's statistics clearly state that if the 7 billion people on this planet have to have the amenities and comforts that an average American has, we need four-and-half planets. But we have only half a planet left!

This aspiration has to change. An Indian module of economic aspiration has to come forth. For example, in Tamil Nadu, if you

go to a wedding, the women will be dressed differently but all the men will be in white clothes – heavily starched. You will not be able to make out who came on a TVS Moped and who came in a Bentley. They will all be sitting together because the essential value is age and respect for his integrity, not just for his moneybags. This has changed in many places though, like in Delhi. We have to get it back. We don't have to go the way the West has gone, because that kind of economic module was possible only with the idea that you have to rob the whole world if your people have to live well. This is what imperialism meant. That has to go from our heads. This has to be brought into our laws and our consciousness.

Sadhguru and Kiran Bedi at "In Conversation with the Mystic," an exclusive series of interactive episodes where eminent personalities from various walks of life explore a range of subjects with Sadhguru.

Kiran Bedi: Is the media driving reasonable aspiration? Because every day I want to have something better and I see, "This is available," and I would say, "Why can't I have this? You

have it, why can’t I have it?” Isn’t it in conflict with what you are talking about? How do we address this conflict?

Sadhguru: I am not talking about controlling human aspiration, I am talking about redirecting human aspiration. It need not go towards the American coast.

Kiran Bedi: How do we do it?

Sadhguru: It is not through any one thing. Education, campaign, laws – all of these have to coalesce themselves. “How to live well in India,” the idea of that has to change right now. I am not making a comment on how people live, it is not my business, but for the weather we have in this country, I see our lawyers come in a shirt, a black coat and a tie. That is suicide as far as I am concerned. But we have laws like that. He cannot help it. If he has to go and work, he has to wear it.

Like this, on every level, we believe that what comes from outside the country is superior; what is in this country is not good enough. If we have to pep this up, one thing is that our manufacturing has to pep up. Today we cannot divide the world as this country and that country, because economics has united the globe in many ways. For example, the best cars should be manufactured here. It is beginning to happen. We can say, “Range Rover is Indian.” BMW can become Indian.

For this, you have to rise to a position of strength. Otherwise it will not happen. That is the first thing that we need to do in some way. Either in education or manufacturing, or simply by juggling economics, we have to get to a little higher crest to be able to do the right thing in the world. People are not aspiring for America. People are aspiring for success, and America has become the symbol of success. Even a kindergarten child today knows carbon dioxide is bad for you and oxygen is what this

body needs, but if they put carbon dioxide in a bottle and say “This is the real thing,” everyone drinks it.

The sweetest thing in anyone’s life is always success. We have to manifest some success – something that people will feel proud of, and identify with and go for. We have the talent, the intellect and the resource. All that is needed is a focused leadership. In five years’ time it can happen, if the leadership remains focused on what they want to do.

Kiran Bedi: Sadhguru, we can invite a few questions from the audience. Who would like to raise a question?

Questioner: Sadhguru, given the diversity of our nation – there are so many religions and cultures – would it be feasible to have a uniform code of conduct in India? Previous governments have spoken about it but we haven’t seen anything coming out from them. Is there any merit in having it in India?

Sadhguru: If we have to consider ourselves citizens of a particular nation, if I have one law and you have another, it is never going to work. People have been exploiting the differences. It is time to invest and make the differences into a way that it works for us, not against us.

This is a political issue that has been used in a certain way till now. It must change. If we belong to one nation, we must all abide by one kind of rules. If I drive on the left side, you drive on the right side, we are going to be in trouble obviously.

Questioner: We have a small NGO where we started to enable people so that they can live well. We employed some boys who were the sons of maids and drivers and told them we would teach them how to work on CNC machines. Those boys came for two days, but from the third day they didn’t turn up.

When we asked them why, they say, “My hands become black, I don’t want to work with my hands.” This is what is happening. After education, all parents – including myself – do not want their child to do handwork. He should be an officer and sit in an air-conditioned office. This is something where erosion has happened. I would like your insight on this.

Sadhguru: I think I kind of addressed this in the beginning. Our idea of education is entirely English, unfortunately. Everybody is going to the university. For what? We have to live in this universe, not in a university. Right now, this is a serious situation happening in the country. I do not know if these laws are across the nation, but at least in Tamil Nadu – because there were children dropping out of school – the government passed a law a few years ago saying that you cannot fail a child till he reaches the ninth standard. From the first to the ninth standard it is “free pass.”

This was done with misplaced compassion, because if you fail him at the third standard, he won’t come back and sit in the same class again. So they thought, “Let him continue somehow.” It was a good intention, but today you have millions of youth who are 14 or 15 years of age, who wear pants and have the attitude of the educated, but they don’t know education. They can’t add 2 + 2, but they have the attitude of the educated. Now they can’t go back to the farm and work with their father, they can’t learn carpentry if their father is a carpenter or a blacksmith, or work on your CNC machine.

We are creating this youth. This is a dangerous thing. Youth without purpose is a dangerous possibility, always. Our idea of education has to change. Why is it that everyone has to go to school? I do not believe in compulsory education at all.

We have to make a law. By the time you are 18, everyone must be tested and you must have some skill. You must be able to do something with your hands or your brains, otherwise you must go for two years of some kind of compulsory training. In many countries that want to come up well, they have two years of compulsory army training. Ours' need not necessarily be military training. It could be industrial training or something else, but compulsorily, by 18, if they don't have a skill, or they are not progressing towards their academic capabilities, they must be trained. If you don't skill the nation, you will kill the nation.

Questioner: What are your views on having a strong military to make our nation strong?

Sadhguru: We have a one million-strong military. I want you to understand, except maybe one nation, no one even thinks it is worth bombing this country. Our quarrels are with what was once one nation and now a part of our neighborhood. We cannot change that right now, but how much are we investing for this? For one tiny quarrel our investment is too much. Right now we are planning to buy the French Dassault Fighters. Each one of them costs six hundred crores. *Bhoom* – one crash and it is gone in a second.

We must, and we do, have a strong military, because human beings are still not in such a level of consciousness that we can simply live without protection. Our military needs to be upgraded in many ways, and that will be done, but why can't we pick something for one-tenth of the cost? I asked them this in one of the conferences where they were talking about Dassaults, and they said, "No Sadhguru, Dassault is fantastic." I am also an aviator, I am a licensed pilot, I know what an airplane is. I know you can't compare a Dassault to anything else, but you just need airplanes that fly and bomb, and that is all that matters. We can

get that at one-tenth of the price. You are not going to pick a fight with the United States of America and go to war with them. If at all you have a quarrel, it is with your neighbor.

I would like to suggest to the government that they take these six hundred crores, and instead of buying a hundred airplanes, set up one hundred power stations in Pakistan. Our companies will do it if you tell them. Let their companies invest their money here. If you invest your money there, you are not going to bomb them. If they invest their money here, they are not going to bomb you.

I know I am making it simplistic, but fundamentally – that is all it is. There are many complications, but they can be sorted out. It is not going to happen in one day, but in the next ten to fifteen years, you can run your enmity down.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India, history will look upon the act of depriving a whole nation of arms, as the blackest.” It is amazing that he said that. That is the man, and that is why you need to respect him – he is not just moral code. He is talking about a strong military. A strong military is definitely needed, but instead of being prepared to fight an enemy, the best way is to eliminate the enemy. You can eliminate the enemy only when you eliminate your enmity. If you buy Chinese fighter jets, you have eliminated one major enemy or imagined enemy. If China is not there, do business with Pakistan and another enemy is gone, and you can focus on what you want to do.

Sadhguru with Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan, President of the Lok Satta Party and a well-known anti-corruption activist, during an exciting tete-à-tete at Hyderabad. Sadhguru and Dr. Narayan discussed clean politics and citizen-centered governance.

Questioner: Leadership is one part of nation building or governance. But society at large also needs to speak the truth. Wherever you may be – in a school, office or organization – it is very hard to find people who can speak up and follow the law, and speak honestly.

Sadhguru: Probably I am very fortunate with this aspect. I constantly live among people who always speak the truth in my face, and they are dedicated and committed. So I may be too fortunate on this sphere. I know what you are saying. Integrity is a weak point. About speaking up, courage or whatever, you need to understand – we have been an occupied nation for over a thousand years.

I remember when I was in college, my mother used to be so worried. Those were the times when all kinds of strikes were happening. She knew I was a firebrand. If I step out, I may be in trouble. She would say, “Just go to the college and come back home. Something is happening on the street, don’t go anywhere else.” But I would ask her, “Why shouldn’t I go? These things are happening, doesn’t this matter to you? What is your stand on this?” “Yes it must happen but you come home.” This is the wisdom of an occupied nation. Somehow duck and you will survive. If you stand up, your head may go.

We are no longer an occupied nation. One generation that came from there still had that, but that is not the case with today’s generation. They will stand up and speak what they want.

About speaking the truth, I don’t think there is a culture of not speaking the truth as such around us. It is just that if we are talking in terms of following laws and breaking laws, the important thing is we have made laws that are so ambiguous. Forget about difficult to follow – they are difficult to understand, first of all.

I was speaking to a group of top-level business people some time ago. This was when anti-corruption movements were going on in Chennai and I asked them, “Can any of you put your hands on your heart and say you have not yielded to corruption?” “No. All of us have yielded at some point,” they replied. Because otherwise you won’t exist. That is how the laws are. People who are in some particular trade don’t understand the laws that govern that trade.

Some time ago, we wanted to start a business entity in India to export something to America, where we wanted another entity. It took ninety days for us to register this name, get the

trademark and the sales tax number, and the rest of the things in India. When I went to the United States, I was in our office and I told them, “We need to register this. This is the style, this is the logo, this is what we need to do.” Then I started conversing on the phone and forty minutes later they said, “Sadhguru, it’s ready.” I asked them, “What’s ready?” “The company is ready to operate.” Just on the computer, they got the company ready, completed the formalities and everything else, in forty minutes.

I thought, “What are we doing to ourselves?” India is one of the most difficult places to start a business. We are a developing country. It should be left open. The problem is, we think someone will exploit the situation if we leave it open. The competent will always exploit. Framing the right laws to see that this exploitive process benefits all, is governance. If you don’t have the courage to govern, you try to stop everything and think that is governance. No. You facilitate it, and then manage it in such a way that the cream goes to everyone, as far as possible. That is governance.

To get building permission, we take fourteen months running from place to place. In fourteen months, the whole real estate scene would have changed completely! In the United States, where we are building a large center, they just give you a code book. The architect must know the code book. You build whatever you want. No permission is required. Before you occupy the place, there will be an inspection. If it is by the code, fine, otherwise the building goes down and you go in. That’s all.

Unfortunately, with the kind of laws we have, we are essentially trying to make everyone into some kind of a criminal. Without breaking some law you can’t live in this country. If your activity is wide, you are breaking some law. Only someone who is working in a government office, and just goes to office and

comes home, may not be breaking a law. Anyone running a business, an organization, or anything large enough, has to break some law every day. I may break one law, someone else may break two, a very enterprising person will break a hundred. That is what is happening in the country.

Since we are talking about the economy big-time, it is very important that, to start with, business laws are turned upside down in the next three months. If a multinational company is willing to bring ten billion dollars as investment, with technology and talent, and is willing to create a large number of jobs, I would say, just pull down all the laws and make an agreement with them, like you would a sale agreement – "You must follow these ten points" – otherwise no laws for him within those premises. He will run the company, and economic progress will happen. This needs to happen.

I know a lot of people will protest, but they do not know what it means to be hungry. "Stomach-full" people will talk about nuances of rules and ethics. Stomach-empty people – 600 million of them – what they need is to perform well tomorrow morning in whatever things they do. When the country is in such a state, no one can have fancy ideas of moralities, ethics and nuances. It must just happen.

Kiran Bedi: I have one final question to sum up. What is your dream and vision of India in 2020?

Sadhguru: India is a large mass of people. So, one of the most important things is food security, which we are losing out on because we are yielding to certain forces in the world. India has to ensure food and water are taken care of for our people. By 2020, we must be 100% on the ball with food and water. Otherwise, other nations will not attack you with bombs, they will control your food and you will fall at their feet. Right now, seeds

are coming from outside the country. If, in a certain year, they don’t send seeds, you must see what will happen. Millions of people will go just like that!

Right now, sixty percent of the Indian population have underdeveloped skeletal systems. That means, not just your shoulders, but your brain also did not grow to its full size. You are generating an underdeveloped population, which is the biggest disaster.

Food and water must be secured 100%. After that, industrial development, IT, etc., – these things will happen anyway. But whatever food we eat in this land must be generated here. We have land that produces food twelve months of the year, which is a phenomenon. Very few countries in the world can do that. We must ensure that this happens, or someone will trip us very easily.

Kiran Bedi: And what else?

Sadhguru: Building a great nation, on one level, means building great people, great institutions, and an atmosphere that allows people to express their greatness. Right now, we have created a situation with an ambiguous and unnecessarily complex rulebook. Or in other words, we are making criminals of people who have no intention to be that. Simple and unambiguous rules to conduct economic, social and other activity – this is something that needs the best minds in the country to work upon. Simple rules with minimum loopholes. Bharat Mata Ki Jai!

Finding Your Rhythm

When we say Bharat or Bharata or Bharatam, we are not talking about nationalism. This is about setting a culture where everyone can find the right rhythm. If you get the rhythm or the tala right, you will ride the raga – the tune that the source of creation has set – and life becomes beautiful. Those who get the rhythm right, in their experience, life is wonderful. Those who do not get the rhythm right, in their experience, life is misery. They feel crushed by everything around them.

This ancient culture, which goes back 15,000 years, focused on mastering how to set the right rhythm – how each human being, irrespective of who he or she is, can set the right rhythm. The kind of rhythm depends on individual capability. For the same raga, there are a million rhythms one can set. All of us cannot dance to one rhythm, everyone has to set his own, but it has to be in tune with the raga. Otherwise, people will get crushed by the process of life. It doesn't matter whether you think you are a good man, you will anyway get crushed. Or the whole world may think you are bad, but you may be doing great because you got your tala right, and everything is fine with you.

As a culture, Bharat is not about a particular nation. This is about setting a culture where every human being gets the opportunity to aspire for the highest, so human beings will not get tangled up in just earning a living or fulfilling their survival and procreation. They will constantly strive and aspire for something bigger than survival.

Godless nation

Before people devised divisive ways of fracturing humanity to a point where it seems almost impossible to fix, the most

powerful tools necessary to raise human consciousness were realized and propagated in this culture. Actually, no Hindu knows which religion he is because he doesn't even know whom to worship. One day you go to a Shiva temple, another day you go to a Krishna temple, and another day to a Karthikeya temple, and it's okay.

There never was a religion, and there never was a God. This is a godless but devout nation, because there is no concretized idea of God in this country. Anyone can worship whatever they feel like. Till certain aggressive religions entered, we never had the idea that there is a God up there. We have something called Sanatana Dharma, which means "a universal religion."

A universal religion does not mean one religion for everyone. We are talking about all of us having our own religion. Because Hindu is a geographical identity, you can worship a man and be a Hindu, you can worship a woman and be a Hindu, you can worship a snake or a cow, or a monkey or a rock, and be a Hindu. You can worship your wife, your husband or your child, and be a Hindu. Or you can do no worship at all in your life, and still be a Hindu.

This was a very cosmogenic culture, never a god-oriented culture. Essentially, there are two fundamental ways of looking at the existence. One thing is, people believe there is a god somewhere, and when he has nothing to do – he will create a creation. This is one kind of belief system. Or, in other words, that which people refer to as god is transcendental. It is not associated with creation; it is something that he throws out.

Another way of looking at creation is that it is cosmogenic. The word "cosmogenic" comes from two words, "cosmos" and "genesis." Cosmos, in Greek, literally means "made to order." Or, in other words, it is made to a plan, not a random happening. It

is not something that fell out of somebody's mouth or hands, but something that is consciously created. Anyone who pays a little attention will clearly know that it is not happening haphazardly; it is in a process of genesis or evolution always, from within itself.

When you say *a* God, you are talking about dictatorship, not democracy. If he decides everything, it is dictatorship, isn't it? So there never was a God, but we have millions of gods. Where did all of them land up from? Well, everyone created their gods, but we developed an inferiority complex, because other people laughed at us for having so many gods. We should have been proud – "Yes, we have 33 million. What's the problem? We are very rich." I am one of the few who is continuing to create gods. It is just that because a very dominant western culture came and ruled, Indian people slowly became shy of creating gods. Otherwise, everyone is supposed to create his own *Ishta Devata*, and worship their own favorite god.

What is this god-making business? Is it play or entertainment? No. Human beings are who they are in relationship to every other creature on this planet, only because of the tools we created. If we did not have these tools, we are not comparable to other creatures. They are much stronger. They would have dominated us.

Tools are not only in terms of screwdrivers or swords or guns. We found subtler tools to give us access to deeper dimensions of life. We worship these tools as gods. They are a doorway that we can open and explore. It is a subjective tool. It can enhance you into things that you have not imagined possible. "That's crazy," you may think. "How can you worship a screwdriver or a spanner?" Let's say from tomorrow morning, you go to work as a plumber or an electrician – no screwdriver, no spanner, no

wrench. With your nails and your teeth you must do plumbing and electricity work. Three days later, if I give you a screwdriver, you will worship it! That is what a tool means. A tool is not a simple thing. It is something that has enhanced you from being a small, little human being into phenomenal possibilities.

This culture had powerful tools that could open up dimensions which would otherwise not be available to you. For example, if I am to speak to a large number of people, I would use a microphone. This is a tool. A tool can only enhance what we are doing; it cannot do something we cannot do. Similarly, a computer is a product of our minds, but still, if we are asked to multiply 1736 with 13,343, we reach for a calculator – a tool. Everything that the calculator has, the mind has. It is not that the calculation is not possible in the mind. It is, but this instrument allows us to use our body in a much better way.

Every machine that we have created is an extension of what we can already do. Because we can project our mind into something which is not yet here, because we can aspire to something which is not yet in our life, opening doors and windows into that dimension became a possibility. With subtler and subtler tools, because they did such phenomenal things for us, and we saw there was no way we could have opened those doors without these tools – we bow down to them. Because we bow down, it does not mean they landed upon us from somewhere. We created them, but we bow down to them because they do things that we cannot do by ourselves, and open up doors to dimensions that we never thought possible.

In this context, many kinds of powerful devices were created. There is a whole science of temple building, where a temple can become an enormous field of energy, a sea of energy. You must see some of the temples in India. You don’t have to believe in

any gods. If you are a little sensitive, you can just sit there, and it will activate you from within.

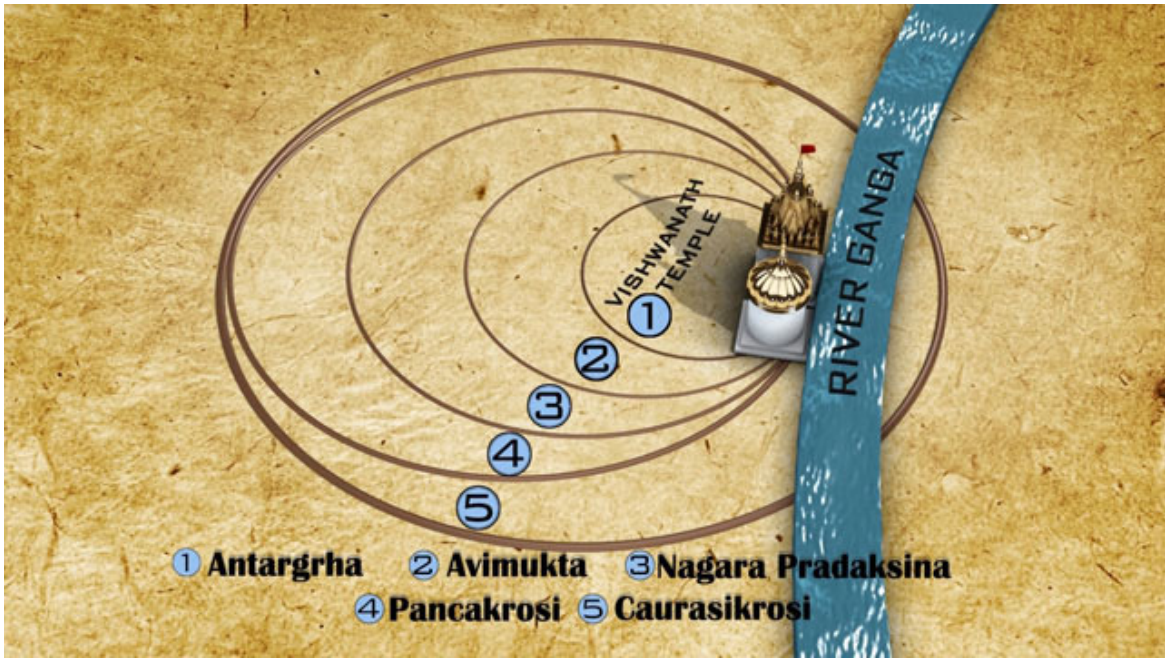
“Dhyana” means meditation, and “linga” literally means form. Through an intense process of consecration, Sadhguru established the Dhyanalinga with all the seven chakras energized to the peak. Simply sitting in its sphere allows even those unaware of meditation to experience deep states of meditativeness.

If you come and sit in the Dhyanalinga at the Isha Yoga Center, it will shake you from within because this form is consecrated in a very powerful way. No rituals or prayers are performed in this temple; there is always total silence. People from all religious backgrounds come and sit here. Just sitting silently for a few minutes in the Dhyanalinga is enough to make even those unaware of meditation experience a state of deep meditativeness. The space has been created like that.

Kashi – The city of light

Kashi is another such powerful device. When the yogis saw the nature of the cosmos – as to how it is evolving from within itself, and its ability to evolve is quite limitless – they were tempted to make their own. Many wonderful attempts have been made in various parts of this country, and also in certain other parts of this world. You must see Delphi in Greece, where they created a miniature Kashi. Essentially, what this means is, everything in creation, one way or the other, is a micro-replica of the cosmos itself. That goes for the human body too. Everything in the existence is just a micro-version of the cosmic possibility. Based on this, many things have been done.

In Kashi, they built a kind of instrument in the form of a city which brings a union between the micro and the macro. This little human being can have a phenomenal possibility of uniting with the cosmic reality, of knowing the pleasure, ecstasy and beauty of becoming one with the cosmic nature. Geometrically, Kashi is a perfect manifestation of how the cosmos – or the macrocosm and the microcosm – can meet. There have been many instruments like this in the country. For example, Dhyanalinga itself is just that manifestation, but we have our limitations, so we could only create a small capsule of the cosmos. But if one is willing, it is willing to open endlessly because it is a device that facilitates the ultimate possibility.



The five sacred precincts of Kashi. Sadhguru says, "Kashi is a phenomenal yantra – a tower of possibility. Never before or after has anyone attempted so grand a yantra. It runs over a circumference of 168 kilometers."

To create a city like Kashi is a mad ambition, and they did it thousands of years ago. There were 72,000 shrines – the number of *nadis* (energy channels) in the human body. The whole process is like a manifestation of a mega human body to make contact with a larger cosmic body. It is because of this that the whole tradition came up, "If you go to Kashi, that is it." You don't want to leave the place, because when you get connected to the cosmic nature, why would you want to go anywhere else?

There are many stories about Kashi that speak of the possibility the city offered. The legend of Kashi – one hundred percent – goes by the fundamental that Shiva himself lived here. This is his winter place. He lived as an ascetic in the upper regions of the Himalayas, but when he got married to a princess, compromises had to be made. And being a graceful man, he

decided he would move to the plains, as Kashi was the most fabulously built city at the time.

There is a beautiful story. Shiva left Kashi because of some political reasons. The gods were afraid that Kashi would lose its reverberance if it was not properly managed, so they asked Divodasa to become the king. But he put a condition, “If I have to become the king, Shiva has to leave, because with him around, me being a king is not going to work. People will gather around him.”

So, Shiva along with Parvati left to Mount Mandara, but he did not want to stay. He wanted to come back to Kashi, so he first sent messengers. They came and they just loved the city so much, they didn’t go back. Then Shiva sent sixty-four celestial women. He said, “Somehow, corrupt the king. Once we find some fault in him, we can send him packing, and I’ll come back.” They came, they entrenched themselves all over the society wanting to corrupt it, but they loved the place so much, they forgot the mission and settled down.

Then he sent Surya Deva. He also came – all the Aditya temples are for him – he loved it so much he didn’t go back. Surya Deva was so ashamed and scared that he could not fulfill Shiva’s mission, because his love for the city was greater than his commitment to the mission, so he turned south and tilted to one side and settled down.

Then Shiva sent Brahma. Brahma himself came and loved it, and he did not go back. Then Shiva said, “I cannot trust any of these people,” and he sent two of his most trusted *ganas*. Both of them came; they could not forget Shiva – they are his people – but they loved the place so much and thought, “This is the only place Shiva should live, not Mount Mandara.” Then they became *dwarapalakas* (gate keepers) of this city. Shiva then sent two

more – Ganesha and another. They came and took charge of the city. They started preparing and guarding the city. They said, “Anyway, Shiva has to come; there is no point in going back.” Then Divodasa was tempted with *mukti*. He did not fall for any kind of corruption, but he was tempted with mukti and he took it. Then Shiva came back.

These are all stories to tell you how much they longed to be here, not because of pleasure, but because it was a mechanism for this tiny little organism to connect with the larger organism of the cosmos. The city was not just a dwelling place, it was a mechanism to go beyond all limitations.

Similarly, there were parts of India where they tried to set up the very geography of the region into a sacred body. Centers were created across the geography so that the very land operates like one body. Active movements of spiritual processes were kept up to see that everyone who lived in that region were naturally spiritual. These had a tremendous impact and result at one time, but many were dislocated by a series of invasions.

The elements five

But you can still witness these mechanisms in South India, with the five *pancha bhuta* temples. Everything that you know as physical creation is just the mischief of five elements, or pancha bhutas – earth, water, fire, air and space. This mischief of five elements is so magnificently put together that it could be an eternal trap.

When I say a trap, if you enter any kind of trap, it traps you into some sense of limitedness. If you say “I am trapped,” what you are saying is your freedom has been curtailed and your life has been made into a limited possibility. That is a trap. The physical in the existence is definitely a trap because it limits you.

What could have been boundless gets limited. In that context, the physical creation is a trap. When you are in it, enjoy it, but at the same time you are constantly looking for a way to get out of it. The foolish way is you start enjoying it, and you forget that you have to go beyond it. Anyway you are trapped, so let us enjoy the trap; after all, it is a magnificent trap – but it is still a trap. The way of the yogi is to enjoy the trap when he is in it, but he is working to transcend the trap all the time.

The wise of the past devised many methods as to how to break and go beyond the trap. We developed a system called *bhuta shuddhi* where there is a scientific way of becoming free from the five elements. *Bhuta* means “the elements,” and bhuta shuddhi is the cleansing of the five elements within the system. Bhuta shuddhi is the most basic practice and fundamental aspect of yoga. If you become free from the five elements, you become totally free from the physical. To do that kind of *sadhana* (instruments, means or practices meant for one’s spiritual growth), they built devices which are supportive for that purpose. These devices are called *bhuta lingas*.

The Arunachaleshwara temple at Thiruvannamalai, is one of the five Pancha Bhuta sthalas, which enshrines Agni or the element of fire.

These are five temples for the five elements – water is in Thiruvanaikaval, space is in Chidambaram, fire is Thiruvannamalai, Kalahasti is air, and Kanchipuram is earth. Geographically, they are all within the Deccan Plateau – four in Tamil Nadu and one in Andhra Pradesh. These temples were created not for worship, but for sadhana. People moved from one temple to the other to do sadhana on each of the five elements – to get mastery over, and also to enhance, these aspects which could do miracles for one's wellbeing in so many ways. To become free from the water element, you go to that particular temple and do one kind of sadhana. To become free from air, you do another one. Like this, these five wonderful temples were infused with that kind of energy which assists that type of sadhana. Yogis traveled from temple to temple, continuing their sadhana from one to the other.

These five temples were built so that they function in tandem, in a certain way so that the whole region could benefit. Not just human beings, the very land would benefit; every creature – even a worm and an insect – would benefit from this. Now this connection is not there anymore, because the sadhana atmosphere has been taken away. This understanding and mastery is generally missing, but the temples still exist. Some of them have maintained that vibrance and quality, some of them have become weak. Now they have all become separate administrations and everybody thinks, "This is my temple, that is your temple."

A few years ago, I happened to be at Thiruvannamalai – the temple for fire. It is an incredible masterpiece of architecture and is built in such a way that, on two particular days in the year, sunlight falls directly on the deity from a little window. They engineered it like this. This engineering is not just of the building, it involves an understanding of the geographical

patterns, and the celestial movements of the planet in relation to the sun. When I went there, they had fixed an exhaust fan in that little window! I looked at it aghast. Then I asked them whether they were maintaining any connection with the other four elements. “We have nothing to do with those,” they said. This is like five people who got into a car. After some time, everybody took their own wheel, and one took the steering wheel in his hand and said, “This is mine, this is yours. We all go our own way.” The only thing is there is no automobile anymore.

These temples were built like one big machine, such that the five elements in this region happen with a certain vibrance, so human beings can live with a certain stability and purpose within themselves; so that human beings can be a possibility – not poison – within themselves.

The building of temples became a huge process in South India, and many massive temples were built. Even if you just look at their physical architecture, the brilliance behind it is unbelievable. Temples were always built such that the temple would be grand and huge, but the people who built it were not living in palaces – they lived in little huts, and it did not matter to them because they knew that the temple would be a tool for human wellbeing and liberation; everything else is not important. India is the only culture which did not make God supreme. Here, liberation – you becoming free from your bondage – is the supreme goal. God is just a stepping stone. You can either use it or skip over it.

Falling into the infinite

This culture evolved phenomenal technologies for the enhancement of the human spirit – phenomenal possibilities through which a human being could transcend the present

limitations of his physical and psychological structure. The physiological and psychological structures have come with certain possibilities, but enormous limitations. The very nature of a human being is such that he does not like limitations. He is always looking at what is the next thing, and if that happens – the next thing. A human being is not thinking of more – he is thinking of all. A whole lot of them are going in installments towards infinite nature, which is a poor way of transportation. If you are seeking infinite, installment is not the way. It will be an endless installment.

It so happened once – a newly married couple wanted to buy a vacuum cleaner. The husband was looking for a fifty percent discount vacuum cleaner. But when he came home, he discovered that his new bride had bought a deluxe model vacuum cleaner, which cost much more. He asked, “Why did you buy this? After all, we have to clean the floor, why do we need a deluxe model? It costs so much more.” She said, “No honey, it doesn’t cost more, we just have to pay for a few more months, that’s all.”

So if you approach the infinite through installments, it will be endless extra months. If you are approaching the infinite – if you apply your intelligence to it – you clearly know installments are not the way for the infinite. It needs either a fall-back or a leap. “We will slowly do it” doesn’t work. It has to be a dimensional shift. Slowly you can prepare, but it has to be a dimensional shift, not an installment process. So the culture created many tools and devices to such an extent that, wherever you go, sit, stand, gossip, tell a story, or whatever – mukti, mukti, mukti was beaten into people’s consciousness so deeply that even today, if I go to any of the local villages, an illiterate peasant will not ask for a golden horse or something. He will say, “I want mukti.” He

knows nothing and is illiterate, but it has sunk into him that he must seek ultimate liberation.

This is a phenomenon that was created by this culture for a whole mass of people. A spiritual process can take shape in any culture only after material needs are taken care of. It is natural for people to initially believe that if their food, housing, clothing and the little luxuries they are dreaming of are taken care of, everything will be okay. When all those things are taken care of, and you realize that you are still not fulfilled as a human being, that is when you naturally turn inward. If that has to happen, you need a social and cultural situation which is peaceful and well established for a long period of time. That is an advantage that only the Indian culture had in the past. All other cultures were in strife, warfare, and in search of conquest most of the time. Because of this, there were no established societies. This culture had a long phase of established social and cultural situations where naturally, people looked beyond material comfort towards their inner wellbeing. Because of this, we evolved such a powerful spiritual process. There are a million different ways through which you can attain to your ultimate nature.

Most Indians are not aware of the depth of mysticism and spiritual process that has happened, and still continues to happen, in India. This land has always been known as the spiritual capital of the world, simply because no other culture has looked at the inner sciences with as much depth and understanding as this culture has.

In terms of bringing the spiritual process into practical life, a few yogis managed to quietly change the landscape. Agastya Muni was the most effective. The Indian people are still enjoying the benefit of what he did. He touched every human habitation and made sure the spiritual process became a way of life – not

just a teaching or philosophy. Every aspect of life – from something as simple as breathing, eating, sitting, and standing – was evolved as a spiritual process. The ultimate nature of a human being – the nature that is beyond the physical – has been explored so extensively. A lot of it is unfortunately being lost. We are unable to really preserve that. The spiritual culture we see today has, in many ways, been broken by invasions and distorted by long spells of extreme poverty. Much has been dislocated, but the basic ethos and backbone is still not broken, and it cannot be broken. It is still a live culture. A certain strand that is thousands of years old has been kept alive. This has to come back, not just into this country – but the world. It is time we reestablish this in its full glory once again.

It cannot be done the same way as it was in the past. Today, people are much more logical and science-oriented. With the way education is impacting people, a spiritual process will not mean anything to them unless it is offered as a science. The science of yoga does not demand any kind of trust in a philosophy or a person. No belief or faith is needed, and it works. This is one system that has been practiced for thousands of years, and in terms of physical health, mental health, and spiritual wellbeing of a person – it works. In this sense – in many ways – the future of the world is in yoga.

The process of life is such – either you can take a long time to realize the nature of what it is, or if you keenly apply yourself – in a very brief time, you can realize. The moment you realize the nature of what it is, the longing to become free from it is natural. Not because it is bad but because you know the joy of life and also the limitations of life. If you have understood the fabric of life, the longing to go beyond that is very natural.

Tuning into the rhythm

This is a nation that was built on a dream of achieving a right rhythm to arrive at the ultimate level of wellbeing, both in the inner and outer worlds. My aspiration is to create a world like this, where everyone finds his rhythm. People have not found the rhythm of life because we have given so much significance to the psychological and emotional process that is going on within a human being. I think modern psychoanalysis has done phenomenal damage to the spiritual possibilities of what a human being could be – because of analyzing all the rubbish and giving it meanings. All your thought and emotion is just a recycling of what you have gathered. Search as much as you want, you will not find anything new there, because your thought and emotion is only functioning from the limited data that you have gathered. You cannot think or emote anything beyond that. But everybody thinks their thought is more important than somebody else's.

Thoughts and emotions are nothing but a psychological drama – they have no existential relevance. A thousand people can sit in the same place and live in a thousand different worlds right now – that means no one is in reality.

Most people do not experience life – they are only thinking and reacting to situations around them. They have completely lost perspective on life. Today morning, the sun came up on time. "So what?" you ask. If the sun does not come up tomorrow morning, life on this planet will largely seize to exist after some time. But the sun did come up on time this morning. None of the planets in this solar system collided today. In the whole universe – in this endless cosmos – everything is going great. But you have one nasty little thought crawling in your head, and you think it's a bad day.

Once you lose perspective of who you are, there is insanity. This is an almost endless cosmos. In this universal space, this solar system is a tiny speck. In that tiny speck, planet Earth is a micro-speck. In that micro-speck, the city you live in is a super micro-speck. In that you are such a big man! This is what is happening to you every day. Your pains, your pleasures, your struggles are just this – you think you are bigger than who you are.

As long as this madness goes on, how will you find the right rhythm? Life feels like torture because you did not hit the rhythm. You are not riding the raga, you are being crushed by the raga. If you have ever surfed in the ocean, when you ride the wave, it is so fantastic. When you fall in, the way it crushes you, you feel like you are in a concrete mixture.

How to bring this rhythm into every human being? If this has to happen, we have to create a spiritual culture. Not a culture of looking up and looking down, but a culture of paying attention to this life, because you can genuinely pay attention only to this life. You can attend upon other people for their needs, but you cannot pay attention to that life – you can only pay attention to *this* life. If you pay enough attention to this life, you know the tune of the creation and you will naturally find the rhythm – your own rhythm, not like another rhythm, your own unique rhythm – but still it works because for one raga, you can do 7.2 billion rhythms and still produce music out of it.

We want to put this dimension of what we are referring to as Bharata, across to the world, that everyone finds their rhythm. If they have to find their rhythm, they must have attention. If they have to have attention, they need balance. If there is no balance, there is no attention. Today, people are claiming their attention deficiency as if it is a qualification in their life. If there is no

attention, how will you know anything of profoundness in your life? Is it possible to play a game well, or sing, or dance; is it possible to scientifically explore; is it possible to even play marbles properly if you have no attention? Without attention, nothing will happen, but it has become a common thing today – every parent who comes to me says, “Sadhguru, my child doesn’t have attention, but he likes Facebook.”

You have to change the culture. If you do not change the culture, we will regret this so seriously in the future. Right now, we are riding on the jingoism of gadgets. If human attention fails, all your gadgets will fail you one day. If the “I” fails, your iPhone is not going to save you because those gadgets are just a small extension of this gadget – the human being. This gadget is capable of producing another million gadgets if you allow it to, if you explore it in the right context.

In this culture, we established a system, a science, which we called as samskriti. The word “samskriti” today is passing off as culture. “Sam” means “equanimous”. It also means “exuberance”. To generate individual human beings who are perfectly equanimous within themselves is important. Equanimous is being translated today in the English language as being peaceful. This is not about being peaceful, this is about being equanimous, because it is your equanimity that gives you access to everything that is possible: within a human being and outside a human being.

Equanimity leads to exuberance. People have always understood that if you are peaceful, you will be no good for anything. They think you have to be fired up all the time. This is because they understand activity as something that has to be fired by anger or passion or greed. No! Nature is functioning around us. It is not fired by passion, greed or anger. It is simply

on at its fullest capability all the time. Every life upon this planet, from a worm to an insect to a tree – if the necessary opportunity is there – they do their life at the fullest. Yes or no? You think anyone is doing 92%? They are all doing 100% life because there is a certain equanimity. The problem with the human being is, he is given an intellect that is capable of many things, which no other creature is capable of. But because the necessary attention has not been paid, and the necessary time has not been spent as to how to use such a powerful instrument, it has become a major problem for human beings.

There is substantial medical and scientific evidence today to show you that your body and mind function at their best only when you are in a certain state of peacefulness and joyfulness. Samskriti means to bring a state of equanimity. Suppose you were riding a bicycle, you would look around and enjoy what is around you only if you are in perfect balance. Equanimity brings you to ease. Ease allows you the adventure of being exuberant with life. Exuberance of the body, exuberance of the intellect, exuberance of the life energies, brings you to wellbeing in life. Or in other words, samskriti means to do life right – the way it works.

Isha Samskriti was founded by Sadhguru and is envisioned as an offering to children. It provides an ideal environment for children to unfold in harmony within themselves and with the world around them.

On a certain day, a man fell into a septic tank. He desperately tried to come out but could not. Then he started screaming, “Fire, fire!” His neighbors heard this and called the firemen. They came rushing, looking all over the place for fire. No fire, no smoke. Then they found this man, pulled him out, and asked, “Why were you screaming ‘fire’? Where is the fire?” He said, “If I said, ‘Shit, shit!’, would you come?” Unless you do the right things, right things will not happen to you. That is true with the world around you. That is true with what’s within you.

Samskriti focused essentially on developing a human being to his fullest capability. Today, at Isha, we are running schools like this where it is not about loading a child with information. It is not oriented towards anything. It is just to develop the body

and mind to the highest possible capability, and allowing the system to rise to its highest possible peak.

This is not relevant to just one particular country or culture. This is relevant to everyone. Every human being is always trying to find some way to do it right. Aren’t you constantly battling to do your marriage right, your profession right, your business right? It is just that in this culture, they assimilated these things not by looking at the existing situations, but by observing the human mechanism: what it can do, what it cannot do, what is the way to handle this.

We are always busy seeing how to fix the world. The world need not be fixed. If we generate the right kind of human beings, the world will be a wonderful place to live in. The immensity of being human is being completely missed because we are too engaged with other things. If we pay enough attention to the human mechanism, the things we want to do in the world are just a play.

Pay attention!

The only reason why someone is a mystic and someone is not, is lack of attention. Someone is an artist, someone is not. Why? Lack of attention. Someone can shoot straight and someone cannot. Why? Lack of attention. From the simplest to the highest things, it is just lack of attention. When I was just three or four years of age, one thing that I realized was I did not know anything. I did not know anything at all. If someone gave me a glass of water, I did not know what water was, so I simply stared at it for hours on end. I knew if I drank water it would quench my thirst, but do you know what water is really? Do you think anyone in this world knows what water is? It is called H2O but what is H2O? Do you really know what that H and 2 and O is?

You may say Hydrogen and Oxygen, but what is that? It is just round-and-round vocabulary. All we have is vocabulary.

This kind of science is utilitarian. You can use it to learn to use things better. But that is the bane of human life right now. Water is one thing that is freaking the scientific community. They cannot understand what water is because it is one of the few substances which contracts when you heat it, and expands when you cool it. It is one of the few things which exists in all the three states of solid, liquid and gaseous, and it is the very basis of our life.

So I did not know what water is and I just stared for three or four hours. If I saw a leaf, I stared for four or five hours at a stretch. If I sat up in the bed at night, I would stare at the darkness the whole night.

My dear father, being a physician, started thinking I needed psychiatric evaluation. My problem is I do not know anything. When you do not know anything, you have to pay attention. There is no other way. If you do not know what a flower is you will naturally pay attention to it. “Flower” is just a word, it is not the quality of that. If you just say, “This is a flower” and dismiss it, it seems to be over in a moment. But if you look at it for the rest of your life, you will still not know what it is.

So I was just paying attention to everything. All I was doing was staring most of the time. In this condition they sent me to school. I went to the school and stared. The teacher would come and start speaking something. Initially, I understood the words. After some time, I realized the teacher was only making noises and I was making up the meanings in my head. It is because you assume that you know English that you make up the meanings when someone speaks to you. Language is a conspiracy between two people. If I make certain sounds, you understand it in a

certain way. If there is someone else who does not understand this particular language, he will just gape at the whole thing. As far as he is concerned, I am just making meaningless noises all the time.

Once I understood that I was the one making up meanings, I did not see any reason why I should be making up so many meanings in my head. So I stopped. I would just look at the teacher and they would be making “da da da da doo doo doo doo…” going on and on. It looked really amusing and funny, and a smile spread on my face. I was still staring but with a smile on my face. I was very amused but they were not amused. Then after some time, I would not even hear the sound. I could see all kinds of patterns spewing out of their mouths.

After some time, I was not even seeing the physical form of the teacher. I was seeing all kinds of things. No one had ever paid him the kind of attention that I was paying him. I was paying absolute attention to him. I knew everything about the teacher, it is just that I did not know what he was talking.

In 2009, this school where I studied more than forty years ago, said it was their 125th anniversary and they were inviting all their alumni to visit. They wanted me to come and address this gathering. I asked them, “Why me? I was not just a not-good student, I was not even a student.” They said, “Our school has produced ministers, cricket stars, cinema stars, and so many kinds of people, but you are the only mystic, so you must come.” I said okay. They did not give me much option, so I went.

I went and stood in that quadrangle and looked at the same buildings from forty years ago. I looked around and suddenly remembered what happened in one particular classroom. I was in my eighth standard, which means I must have been around twelve years of age, and as usual I was paying attention to the

teacher – not to his teaching – just to the teacher, and he was trying to get a response from me. I would not say a word for many days because I was paying attention to everything. Where is the time to speak? Just about anything, whether it is an insect or a dot on the wall, I was just gaping at it all the time.

The teacher was quite an interesting subject. I was just watching him and after thirty-five or forty minutes, when he could not get a response from me, he came and physically shook me and said, “What are you? You are either the devil or the divine, and I think you are the former.” I did not feel insulted or offended by this. All these days I had this problem that I did not know anything – what is this, that or something else. But there was one absolute – that was me. Suddenly this teacher shook me and made me realize I did not even know what this is. I started thinking, “Okay, am I a devil, am I a divine? Am I this? Am I that?” Suddenly it just freaked me out.

This started off a whole movement in my head. I was still staring, but staring at me, myself. So I closed my eyes and started staring. Initially it started with minutes and hours, then it went into days where I just closed my eyes, and it was still the same staring, but I changed the direction. That was a dimensional shift in my life. People who had earlier thought I needed psychiatric evaluation started saying, “Oh, he is becoming a yogi.” And that is all the difference. That is a huge difference.

The moment you pay substantial attention to what you call “myself,” there is nothing that will not yield to you in the existence, because that which you refer to as the source of creation – whatever that is – is functioning within you. Once you have access to that, suddenly it is a different world. You are a

different phenomenon. And every human being is capable of this.

Your ability to pay attention is the key to how deep you can go into something – whatever that something is. How profound your attention is, is how deep you will sink into it and how much access you get into it. Human consciousness is such: if you pay enough attention, the whole existence has to yield. There is no other way.

I was talking to a group of Harvard alumni who are all hugely successful, and they were saying, “You know, when we were in college, those guys that we thought would really make it big, did not make it. Those smart guys were all picked up by major companies. Those of us who were confused, who did not know what to do with our lives when we came out, we struggled around, and it is we who made it big. They did not make it big.”

So I asked, “What happened?” They were discussing this, and the essential thing is just that these so-called smart ones were picked up by major companies; they got a very comfortable job and a big salary; they settled into it, and they stayed there. These people who did not know what to do, they went out, looked around at everything, some of them came up with their own brilliant ideas, and they started their own companies, or they went up the hard way. Because things were not certain, they had to pay attention to everything; they observed the whole world. Those people settled into their nice, cushy jobs and they stayed there. But these people went hundred-fold more than those smart people.

Whatever attention level you have right now is not all that is possible. There is more, but that is still redundant; it is still in an un-manifest state, where you do not have access to it. So, at least you must pay all of what you have. But even with your

mental attention, you are at different levels of attention at different times of your life, and at different times of the day. If you are doing your work, you are in one level of attention. If you are in meditation, you are in a different level of attention. If you are eating something that you like very much, you are in a different level of attention. Your levels of attention are different at different times, and whatever the peak attention that you have had in your life at any time, that is still not all of it. You are capable of much more attention.

A few years ago, I took a small group of people on a trek on a railway track between Subramanya and Mangalore in Karnataka. This stretch has over 300 bridges and 100 tunnels. You are practically either on a bridge or in a tunnel most of the time, and it is an absolutely wonderful mountain. Some of the tunnels are over a kilometer long. Even in the day, it is pitch dark. You cannot see your own hand in front of you. Probably most people have never been in a place like that because wherever you are, there is some light. Even the starlight gives you some sense of vision. But in those tunnels, after some time, you do not know whether your eyes are open or closed; it is that dark.

I made them walk in those tunnels without any torches. Initially, people were so terrified, but after some time, slowly they started walking and enjoying the whole experience. If you are in a place like that, your attention becomes really heightened. If you can keep your attention like this every moment of your life, then you will glow. You will really glow.

At the ashram, I am constantly pushing people to notice even little things. This is not just about the cleanliness or aesthetics of the place, but just to be absolutely attentive to every little thing. If a pebble has turned over, you must notice it. It is not a question of the pebble, it is just that you are attentive. If you

bring this attention to a peak, if you learn to have a heightened sense of attention, then we can teach you methods as to what you must, and what you should not attend to within yourself.

If you become very attentive, we can look at how to make use of that attentiveness. Spirituality happens only because you paid attention to your life, and you saw that you don’t know where it begins and where it ends. You are going about as if whatever you are doing is the be all and end all of life. The moment you pay a little attention, you understand “This is not it.”

So, the very first step of even thinking spiritual comes to you only because of a certain level of attention. If you pay much more attention to everything, if you heighten your ability to be attentive, that could be used in miraculous ways.

Building Bharat

Bharat is a spiritual culture, but that does not mean people just sat with their eyes closed. These are not people who stayed home. They went across the world. If you look back, some of the oldest docks in the world were built in this land. Lothal in Gujarat – something like 5,000 years old – was a port on the Sabarmati river, near the Arabian Sea, that could berth and service ships in any season. Their understanding of the tidal movement, the ocean, and the river was so fantastic, they built it in such a way that it never gathered silt.

A much older port, down in Tamil Nadu, is Poompuhar. The structure went down when the ocean level rose by many meters. The first navigation to any part of the world happened from here. There are records and legends of people reaching South America, and the exchange of cultures and people there. It is just that when invaders came in recent times, their essential goal was to obliterate history because people rise and fight only when there is pride about something.

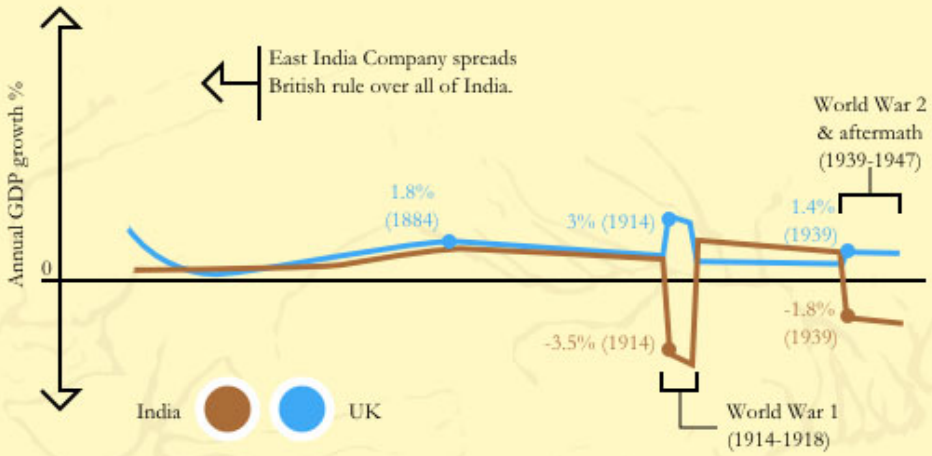
Largely, most of Indian history that you read today was written by the British, and they made it in such a way that nothing is more than 6000 years old. So, all history was limited to that time span. But otherwise, India has been a land of enterprise going back far beyond that, with people trading beyond their own borders. Through the silk route, trade happened extensively to West Asia, though that term is no longer used today. Everyone calls it the Middle East. The westernmost part of Asia is what you today call Palestine, Lebanon, Israel and that region. There was very active trade with West Asia and the northern part of Africa.

If you go to Damascus in Syria, the city is almost gone, but some part of it remains intact. I wanted to go through the whole experience of what an Indian trader would have gone through at that time, so I visited the public baths there. There was this huge, muscular man with a towel around his waist who put me on a stainless steel table and gave me what was supposed to be a massage. We don't know what kind of bones and muscles they had thousands of years ago, but 21st century bones feel like they are going to break. Then they pour boiling hot water over you, and a very rough kind of scrub is used to scrub you from head to toe. Once again, 21st century skin goes with the scrub and by the time you come out, everything is feeling loose. Then they give you some nice tea with some exotic herbs in it, and you are supposed to sit and relax and roll your eyeballs. For an Indian trader who must have just landed in Damascus after travelling 3600 kilometers through the desert and sold his goods, a bath must have been a really nice thing.

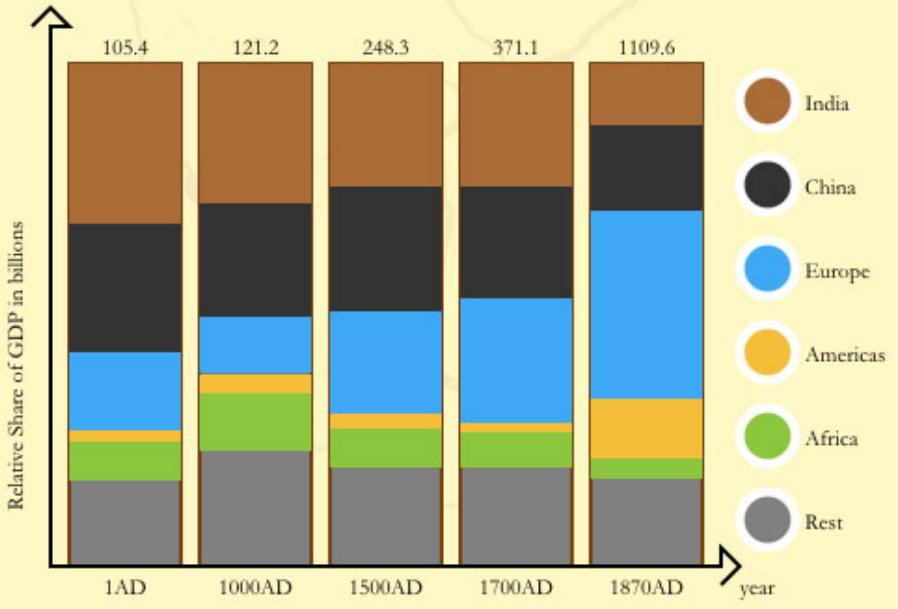
Till about 300 years ago, about twenty-five percent of the world's economy was India. A major fraction of the international trade went through India. In 250 years, we were really robbed and became one of the poorest nations in the world. Today, there is a resurgence of enterprise in the country but there are many systemic problems, which they are trying to clean up now.

India & Britain During the British Raj

India & UK Annual GDP Growth Comparison (1830-1947)*

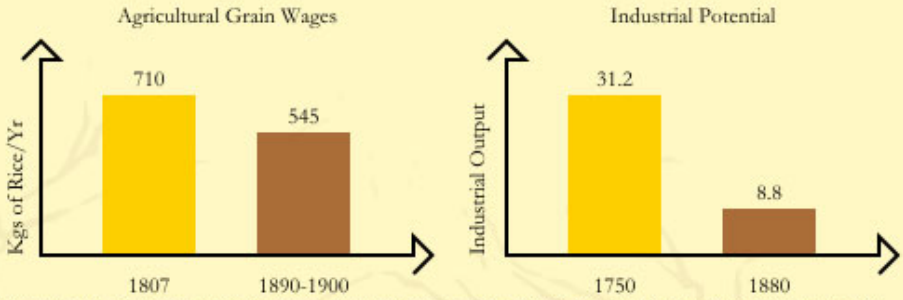


Region-wise GDP Distribution (in 1990 USD)



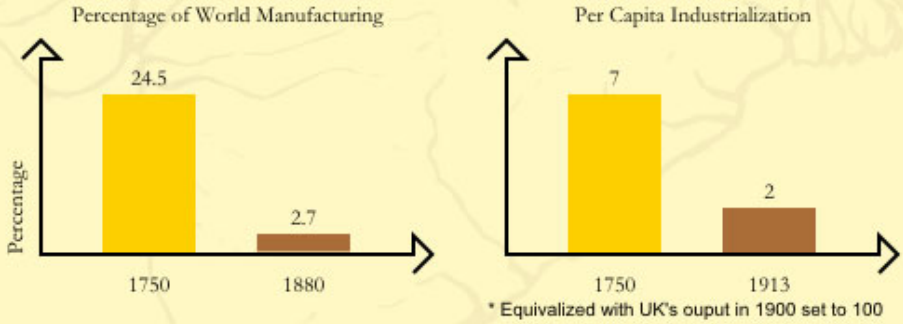
*Due to lack of accurate data, all values are period-wise averaged and approximated.
Source: The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective

India Between 1750-1900



* Wages for Coimbatore district in rupees & grains combined & given as kgs of rice

* Equivalized with UK's ouput in 1900 set to 100



* Equivalized with UK's ouput in 1900 set to 100

* Values are for India, derived from trade values in Bengal assuming Bengal's trade share at 85%

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Source: Bengal Industries and the British Industrial Revolution, The Transition to a Colonial Economy, Industrialisation: Critical Perspectives on the World Economy

This is why we started the INSIGHT program a few years ago, which has sent waves across the business world in India. Most of the time today – in the process of managing a business or an industry – people are destroying themselves, and the situations of life around them.It is very distressing to see that all management education is about a hundred years old, and it all comes from that one Mr. Taylor (Frederick Winslow Taylor) who wrote all the fundamentals of management, and the same things are being taught by every top university in the world, even today, with small modifications.

This was a very brutal way of doing business. It was okay for the East India Company, when they came to trade with a gun behind them, and if you don’t do their deal you are dead. This is a different kind of trading. Things have changed today in the world, and people have to understand that any transaction between people – whether it is the market place or marriage – is sustainable only if it is beneficial to both the people. If it is only beneficial to one person, it could sustain if you had put a gun to someone’s head, but that is not possible anymore. That sort of business is still being done a little bit, but gradually, as years go by, it will not work.

Mr. Ratan Tata, sharing his life experience with Sadhguru, Mr. Ravi Venkatesan, and over 200 participants of the 2014 “INSIGHT: DNA of Success” program, at the Isha Yoga Center.

Of the four major forces in the world – politics, military, religion and economics – that decide the quality of people’s lives to a large extent, I see the economic force as the biggest possibility for bringing about some unification and sensible action. The other forces are merely dictated by belief. If you take people of two different religions or politicians of two different ideologies, they can never come to an agreement. Two military leaders obviously cannot even co-exist. It is only a businessman who is willing to make a deal with anyone, even the devil, if it is a good deal. He has the practical sense to see what works and what does not work in real-life situations.

In the next ten to fifteen years, the economic leadership is poised to play a far more important role in the world than the political and military leadership. Therefore, we are presented with a great opportunity for large-scale change. But the problem

with business leaders is they have a tag around their neck, which says they are a vested interest; they are only interested in making money for themselves. It is high time they shake off this tag. Half of the world's wealth is owned by just one percent of the world's population. Even if just ten percent change happens in their hearts, the world will change. The world is hungry not because there is no food. There is more food than the 7.2 billion people on the planet can eat. It is just that those who need it do not get it, because one way or the other, those who have the power and the means have not cared enough to do something about it.

Ambition to vision

So, the time that I spent with the economic and business leaders is to shift them from personal ambition to a larger vision. I am not seeing larger vision as philanthropy. Larger vision makes much more business sense than personal ambition. The whole modern economy, the very economic engine, runs only if people keep buying and buying. When we have an economy like this, we are trying to include more and more people into our list of clients or customers. The idea is to include the whole 7.2 billion people on the planet.

Right now, only approximately forty percent of the world's population is involved in the economic activity in a meaningful way. Excluding sixty percent of the population and doing business does not make sense – neither your market base nor your human resources have expanded. You can expand either by conquering, or by including. Conquering is a violent way of doing things. So we need to have a model where all businesses can work, with more inclusion. That is why we are talking about inclusive economics. It is a gentler way of doing business.

When I was invited to the World Economic Forum for the first time, people were asking, “What is a mystic doing in an economic forum? Is it a mistake?” A particularly belligerent top CEO came up to me and said, “What are you doing here?” I knew that he would not understand anything except his own jargon, so I said, “See, right now, fifty percent of the world’s population is still hungry. When someone is not eating properly, I cannot talk spirituality to them or teach them meditation, because when a man is hungry, talking to him about meditation and spirituality is obscene. It is vulgar. So, all I am doing here is expanding my market base!”

If we want a gentler and more compassionate economic process, it is not charity, but inclusiveness that is needed. If there is no sense of inclusiveness in individual human beings, there is no way that the systems they create, or actions they perform, will lead to inclusiveness. If individuals do not experience this inclusiveness, they end up creating very exclusive processes.

Spirituality does not mean going to the temple or breaking coconuts. It is about living here in an all-inclusive way and experiencing everything as a part of yourself. Knowing and experiencing life as life, not as individual personalities. One basic aspect of a spiritual process is that it makes one into an all-inclusive human being. At the same time, it will hugely equip the individual to be more efficient, more capable, more balanced and, in turn, more productive. This is good for business. This is good for the world.

This is of utmost importance now, as for the very first time in the history of humanity, we as a generation, have reached a place where we have all the necessary resources, capability and technology to address every human problem of nourishment,

health, education, wellbeing – you name it. Only an inclusive consciousness is missing. The very basis of what we refer to as Bharat is this inclusiveness.

Raising human consciousness

The people of India today have this tremendous possibility, responsibility, and privilege in front of them.India is capable of bringing a new level of success into the world, a new paradigm of what it means to be successful in terms of creating human wellbeing. We have the necessary inner technologies and the wisdom to make this happen. We have to make this world a beautiful place, not by conquests, not by capturing, but by captivating the world and embracing the world like a garland.

In the modern world, nations of great affluence are suffering from a terrible sense of disenchantment within. This culture has mastered the laws that govern inner wellbeing. We have the know-how and scientific methods that could lead to wellbeing of all. Before individuals step out towards external accomplishments, they must arrive at a sense of inner wellbeing. It is only in this that individual human beings can go beyond personal ambition and strive for a larger vision.

What we refer to as spirituality is just technology for inner wellbeing. Spiritual process need not be taught as a philosophy or a belief system. It can be imparted as simple methods which will naturally lead to a more inclusive way of experiencing life.

Isha Kriya is a simple yet potent guided meditation designed by Sadhguru, which makes one drop of spirituality available to every human being. It can be practiced online at ishakriya.com

It is important for corporations to actively cultivate a conducive atmosphere for this. In every corporate center, as there are other facilities, there must also be meditation spaces. Using specially created meditations and other simple tools will bring a great sense of harmony and wellbeing in the individual and the organization. This will pay off in a big way.

The people who make decisions for everybody should be in a good condition, because their decisions impact not just them, but also a large number of lives. The business community needs to shift from operating from limited ambition to a larger vision. I want to see them more joyful, because joyful people are more generous, sensible and flexible, and always more life-oriented. It is very important that they are more peaceful and joyful within

themselves by their own nature – not because of the quarterly balance sheet.

If they are not joyful by their own nature, economic forces can be deadly dangerous with power. Right now, we have made economics the most important aspect of our lives. When the economic engine drives everything, naturally we become very gross, because it is all about pulling and pushing and somehow being on top. There is no room for any subtleness, or gentleness, or concern when competition rules.

In the past, it was only the very ambitious, ruthless people who led the economy. But now, there are many truly sensitive and wonderful human beings, like never before. They are thinking in terms of how to make a difference in the world. “Many” is still a small percentage of the total, but it is good that the trend has started and business leaders are beginning to think about what they can do for the world, not about how much money they can make. They are looking at how to craft businesses in such a way that it will benefit everyone involved.

The business of life is such that, unless you are creating something that you really care for, it doesn’t make any sense. After some time, you will wonder why the hell you are alive! And others around you will also wonder. Every product, no matter what, can be a contribution to someone’s life. You don’t have to worry about how big it gets. If you are doing your best and enjoy doing your best, what’s the problem with life? How many rupees or dollars you have in your pocket won’t make any difference.

What India has to offer for human wellbeing is unparalleled. This is possible nowhere else because this has been nurtured for thousands of years. But right now, the nation is facing a certain danger because this spiritual thread is being systematically hacked at, and there is no moral structure to fall back on. If

spirituality is lost, this is the most immoral country because we have no guilt problems like in the West. India, as a culture, has no morality at all. We never focused on morals and ethics in this country. If you go to the Western countries, they have a rigid sense of morality – which they always break, that is different – but in their society, there is an established sense of morality. In this country, we have no sense of morality, not just today, but always. We always saw morality as a restriction for human consciousness. We did not want to conduct our lives, our societies, and the world around us with morality.

Morality means you will become repetitive. If you become repetitive, you will go in cycles. If you go in circles, obviously you will not get anywhere. So we took the risk of raising human consciousness. A substantial segment of the population invested itself to raise human consciousness, not to teach morality. It is a riskier path, but ultimately it is the only way to handle humanity. If you impose morality, people will do things, then they will feel guilty, but they will put some offering in the temple and continue to do the same thing. They are doing it today, isn't it? Largely in the world, religion has become like this.

A flight was flying over Alabama, a state in the United States, when it developed engine trouble. So the pilot said, "We have engine trouble. I will do my best to make a landing, but there is nothing much we can do. All of you just sit tight in your seats, fasten your seat belts, and do something religious." So one man immediately got up, took his hat, and went passing the hat around. Because in most people's mind, religion means they will ask you for money.

This has come essentially because of a rigid set of morals and ethics which people will invariably break and feel guilty about. If they feel guilty, they cannot live; there has to be a way

out. The way out is, you make a contribution and you will be pardoned. You will see in some religious places, it is written down: “If you have committed this kind of sin, this is how many dollars you must put.”

Once you set morals and say, “Don’t do this, don’t do that,” that is what people will do, because that is the nature of your mind. If you tell your mind “Don’t do this,” that is all it will do.

There is no “Thou shall not” in this country. No one ever told you what you should do and should not do. We only told you how you should be, which is a more difficult thing to impart. If you are in a certain way, we don’t have to tell you, “Do this, do not do this.” You will act as it is appropriate to the situation. This is the fundamental difference. Everywhere else in the world they try to tell you what is right and what is wrong. In this country, in this culture, we never told you what is right and wrong. We only told you what is appropriate for now. What is appropriate tomorrow may be different. You will see, every embodiment of Divine that you worship – Rama, Krishna, Shiva – you cannot call them morally correct people. They are not. Because it never occurred to them that they have to be that way. But they are the peak of human consciousness.

But imparting consciousness will not come easy. It takes lots of work, and it would work best only if it is widely imparted, so that it is there in the air. If the parents, neighbors and the atmosphere are like that, children will grow up with that kind of consciousness. In a way, it is really a shame that we have to go about reminding people about their spirituality. We want the spiritual process to become a part of living culture. Like how a mother teaches a child to brush his teeth, we want it to become like that – without any effort, without the mother knowing about it – she teaches her child the spiritual process. It was so in this

culture just a few generations ago. It was just a part of one's life. Everyone taught it the way they knew it. Then it becomes easy. But now, we are reaching a crossroad in this country where we have not done enough work to raise human consciousness. At the same time, we don't have a shred of morality. We are trying to pick up a few western ethics, which are alien to us, and it does not work because it has not even worked for them.

If you want something indigenous – not indigenous to this nation – indigenous to your being, let us not impose rules of, "Thou shall not" because people will bypass morality the first opportunity they get. Let us make the necessary effort to see that human consciousness operates in a certain way, because that is the only insurance, and the ultimate insurance, that you have. The leadership in the nation needs to grasp what truly holds us together. The glory of this nation's past is rooted in its spiritual possibilities and accomplishments.

Spirituality beyond sectarian religions, spirituality which is a natural outcome of human longing to know – it is only in reinstating this fundamental quest and longing to know, realize and liberate, that individual human beings will have the strength to seek and endure the challenges of building a great nation.

A different kind of superpower

A nation is not its land and buildings – it is its people. If we, as a nation, have to rise and be empowered, the first and foremost thing we need to do is to empower the people. Empowerment does not mean amassing material wealth or technology. It is entirely an inner process, a spiritual process. Without the necessary sensitivity, inner balance, and the faculty of discrimination in individuals, widespread negativity and

perversions creep in. This is how a human being, or an entire culture, sinks to its depths.

Never before has mankind been as comfortable as it is today. The kind of comforts and conveniences that even kings did not have a hundred years ago, are now available to the common man. Our pursuit for these comforts is so vigorous that the very life of the planet is being threatened. Yet, it cannot be said that we are any happier than our forefathers. This is because people are trying to create an outwardly perfect life. But the quality of our lives is based upon our interiority.

Modern technology has tremendous capability, both for creating wellbeing, as well as for total destruction. Without bringing in the dimension of spirituality that brings an experience of all-inclusiveness in individuals, modern technology will surely bring destruction, not just to humanity, but to the planet itself. After all, whatever every human being is doing, whether it is pursuing money, pleasure or God, he is only seeking his own wellbeing. Spirituality only expands this innate urge – to include the whole humanity within oneself. This is the only way that human wellbeing can happen.

In every society, it is necessary that there are at least a handful of people whose passion in life is beyond their own wellbeing. Every society needs those individuals who will go on planting mango trees without thinking whether they will get to eat the fruits or not. Of all the degenerations we have suffered, this is the most damaging, as the nation has been deprived of its greatest strength – producing exalted beings who are rooted in a different dimension of existence, and whose very presence is a blessing to the planet.

One example that the world is familiar with, and whose fruits we continue to eat today, is Gautama Buddha. As a prince,

perhaps he would have had a few more wives and children and ruled over his little kingdom. But as an enlightened master, in many ways, he has changed the course of life on the planet. We value this culture not because we happened to be born into it, but because this culture had perfected the technology of producing such beings.

There has been a certain sense of awareness and wisdom to this mass of people that we, right now, refer to as India, which is very hard to find anywhere else. You may find it in individual people, but a large mass of people having a certain unconscious awareness of many aspects of life is there nowhere else in the world. This society built a lot of infrastructure for inner wellbeing, but today there is very little of it left.

When I was twelve or thirteen years of age, I happened to come across some literature in which Swami Vivekananda said, “Give me hundred truly dedicated people and I will change the face of this country.” At that time, it seems there were 270 million people in this country, but he could not find a hundred truly dedicated people. I thought, “What a tragedy! A man like Vivekananda is a phenomenon. He does not happen every day. When he comes, we could not even give him a hundred people in this vast country.” To me, it seemed like a great tragedy for this culture and country.

There was a time when in a society, a few people were spiritual and the rest just went to them for blessings and sustained their lives. Today, with the tools of science and technology, we have brought ourselves to a self-threatening situation that everyone in the society needs to turn spiritual, otherwise there is no survival for this world. With the kind of equipment and capabilities that we have, it just takes one fool to

blow it up. And there are any number of those fools standing in the queue to get to the top.

Spirituality is no longer a fancy pursuit. It is an absolute necessity for our own, and the planet's survival, that every human being brings in the spiritual dimension into his life. Self-destruction is a live threat unless some sense of oneness touches people, especially the leadership in the planet.

Skeptics are quick to ask, "Is such a thing possible?" I want to tell them, do not think of the future of the world on the basis of existing realities. Existing realities on the planet could be changed in a moment, because existing realities do not take into consideration people's will and commitment, they do not take into consideration the love in their hearts. Existing realities are just looking at the number of people that died on the planet today, the number that were slaughtered today, or the number of bombs that exist on the planet. Statistics cannot consider what is beating in the human heart. If only we can stoke that, if only we can stir up what is happening in individual hearts, miracles are possible.

It is not far away, we just need to work for it. With the spiritual legacy of this land, with the spiritual processes that are available to us today, it is definitely a possibility. If we dedicate ourselves to making this happen around us, we will see something tremendous and dramatic happening on the planet in our own lifetime.

The beauty of this nation is, it is resilient. If you just create a conducive atmosphere, people will do incredible things. Today, various things that we did not even dream were possible for a large segment of the population, could be possible in the next few years.

If we handle the situation smartly, we can be a tremendous power. Power does not mean, “Will we have the biggest army in the world?” Power means everyone looks at you for guidance in the world. If they want to live well, they look at you for guidance – this is power. This culture has always had this power.

JRD Tata, whose family built the basic foundations for Indian industry, was once asked if he wanted India to become an economic superpower. He replied, “I do not want India to be an economic superpower. I want India to be a happy country.” So I do not want India to be a great power. I do not want any country to be a great power. Rather than being a great power, I want every country to be a powerhouse of wellbeing for everyone who lives there.

This aspiration that you want your nation to be a superpower is very silly and childish, and has caused immense damage to the planet. Today, there is a whole argument in the world that without nuclear weapons, there will be no peace, which is unfortunately true right now. Me holding a gun to your head, you holding a gun to my head, and both of us did not shoot – this is not peace, this is madness. Right now, this is how we are trying to achieve peace on the planet. And someday, somebody will shoot, isn’t it? If they get a little sleepy and squeeze the trigger, the whole world will explode. It need not necessarily happen out of intent, it can just happen.

In the 1960s, the United States and the USSR, because of a phenomenal amount of suspicion about each other, believed that the other was going to use nuclear weapons against them and came so close to using their own nuclear weapons. If you read the classified information that they are releasing today, their thought process looks like it was that of a total bunch of lunatics. How close they brought the world to absolute destruction, just

because of this madness in their heads, is incredible! Sometimes it was just minutes away before they would have fired off nuclear weapons; it came that close a few times.

So, this whole aspiration to become a superpower should go. No nation should aspire to be a superpower. Every nation should aspire for their wellbeing. For wellbeing, resources and other things are a little scarce, so there will be some competition. We will pull and push, it is okay. That will happen among human beings, but for that you do not have to pull out your gun, somebody else need not have a bigger gun and become a superpower.

Unfortunately, that is the way the world works right now. America has enough nuclear weapons to destroy the planet, I think. So if you have enough nuclear weapons to destroy the planet and even smash the other planets, then you are a superpower over them. I don't think any nation should aspire for that. I don't want India to go the same way. I hope the other countries also get it out of their head. I wish that a little bit of the teeth of all the superpowers are taken away, and all of them become just good nations. Superpowers are ugly and too full of themselves. We should not become like that.

I want India to be a country of wellbeing, where our standards of wellbeing are different from just a vulgar sense of wealth and conquest. Conquest and robbery are not two different things. If it is done by an individual, it is called burglary. If it is done by a gang, it is called dacoity. If it is done by a nation, it is called conquest or regime change.

So it is not necessary for any nation to aspire to be a superpower. It is necessary that all nations aspire for the wellbeing of their people; that is all that matters. Our aspiration should be to become a sensible, gentle nation, which is for

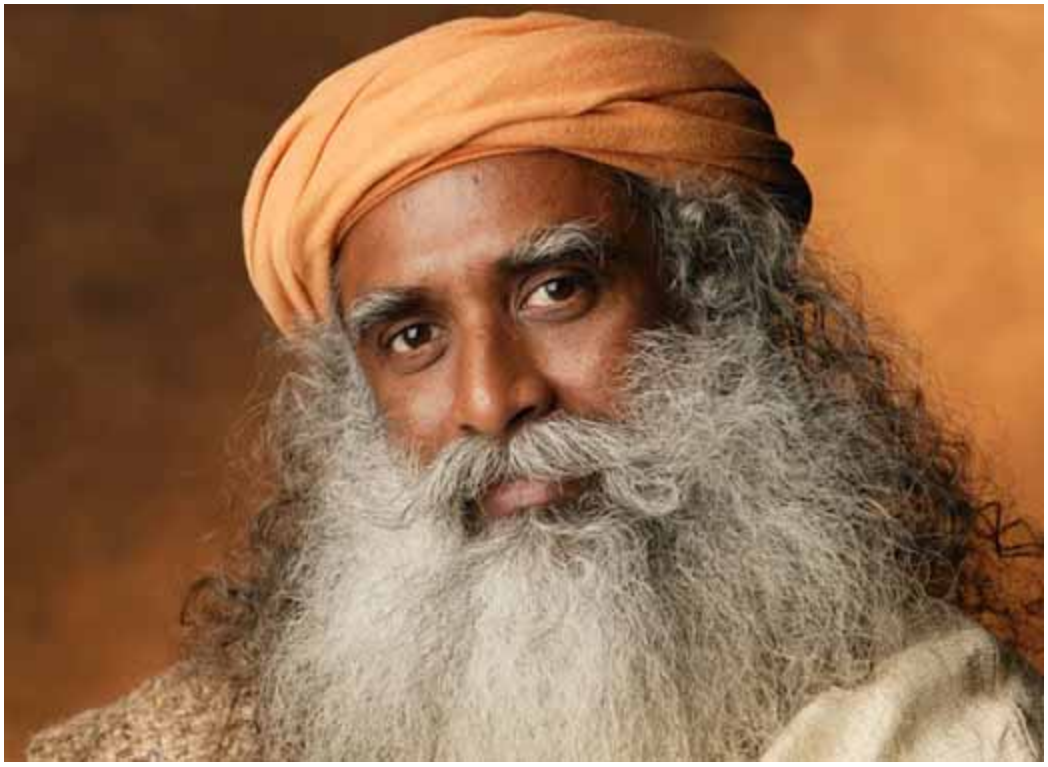
wellbeing for itself and, as far as possible, wellbeing for everyone in the world.India should aspire to make every nation meditative, isn’t it?

People always looked east when they thought of living well. This culture has always had this power, but the culture has fallen. But one must understand, this happens to all cultures. There will be peaks and there will be downtrends. If we as a generation have any sense, we have to pull it up. It does not happen free of cost, everyone has to work for it. Only then it will happen.

I am sure the coming generation will see a much better India than we have seen. Every individual, whatever sphere of life he is in, whatever responsibility he holds, whatever influence he has, has to stand up and make that happen in his area. The governments cannot do this, some other leader cannot do it. Every human being has to do it!

End Pages

Sadhguru



Yogi, mystic, visionary and poet, Sadhguru is a spiritual master with a difference. An arresting blend of profundity and pragmatism, his life and work serve as a reminder that yoga is not an esoteric discipline from an outdated past, but a contemporary science, vitally relevant to our times. Probing, passionate and provocative, insightful, logical and unfailingly witty, Sadhguru’s talks have earned him the reputation of a speaker and opinion-maker of international renown.

With speaking engagements that take him around the world, he is widely sought after by prestigious global forums to address issues as diverse as human rights, business values, and social, environmental and existential issues. He has been a delegate to the United Nations Millennium World Peace Summit, a member of the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders and Alliance for New Humanity, a special invitee to the Australian Leadership Retreat, Tallberg Forum, Indian Economic Summit 2005-2008, as well as a regular at the World Economic Forum in Davos. He was awarded the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar (IGPP) for the year 2008 for Isha Foundation’s Project GreenHands’ efforts.

With a celebratory engagement with life on all levels, Sadhguru’s areas of active involvement encompass fields as diverse as architecture and visual design, poetry and painting, ecology and horticulture, sports and music. He is the author and designer of several unique buildings and consecrated spaces at the Isha Yoga Center, which have gained wide attention for their combination of intense

sacred power with strikingly innovative eco-friendly aesthetics.

Listeners have been ubiquitously impressed by his astute and incisive grasp of current issues and world affairs, as well as his unerringly scientific approach to the question of human wellbeing. Sadhguru is also the founder of Isha Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the wellbeing of the individual and the world for the past three decades. Isha Foundation does not promote any particular ideology, religion, or race, but transmits inner sciences of universal appeal.

Sadhguru's Official Website

Sadhguru's Youtube Channel

Isha Foundation

Isha Foundation is a non-profit human-service organization, supported by over two million volunteers in over 150 centers worldwide. Recognizing the possibility of each person to empower another, Isha Foundation has created a massive movement that is dedicated to address all aspects of human wellbeing, without ascribing to any particular ideology, religion or race.

Isha Foundation is involved in several path-breaking outreach initiatives: Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR) enhances the quality of rural life through healthcare and disease prevention, community revitalization, women empowerment, the creation of sustainable livelihoods, and yoga programs. Isha Vidhya empowers rural children with quality education. Project GreenHands (PGH) initiates mass tree planting and creates a culture of care for the environment to keep this planet liveable for future generations.

Isha’s unique approach in cultivating human potential has gained worldwide recognition and reflects in Isha

Foundation’s special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

The Foundation is headquartered at the Isha Yoga Center, set in the lush rainforest at the base of the Velliangiri Mountains in southern India, and at the Isha Institute of Inner-sciences on the spectacular Cumberland Plateau in central Tennessee, USA.

The Isha Foundation Homepage

The Isha Blog

Isha Yoga

Isha Yoga is a customized system of yoga which distills powerful, ancient yogic methods for a modern person, creating peak physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. This basis of total wellbeing accelerates inner growth, allowing each individual to tap the wealth of vibrant life within oneself. Sadhguru's introductory program, Inner Engineering, introduces Shambhavi Mahamudra, a simple but powerful kriya (inner energy process) for deep inner transformation.

The uniqueness of Isha Yoga is that it is offered as a science. It draws on the ancient yogic principle that the body is the temple of the spirit and that good health is fundamental to personal and spiritual development. Scientifically structured, it promotes beneficial changes in one's inner chemistry to accelerate the release of physical,

mental and emotional blocks and produce a life-transforming impact of profound experience, clarity and boundless energy.

Isha Yoga involves a combination of carefully selected purificatory and preparatory practices, including a series of dynamic breathing techniques and meditation in simple sitting postures. The practices that are taught do not demand physical agility or previous experience of yoga. They integrate seamlessly into one's daily life, allowing one to function at the optimum level, making peace and joy one's natural way of being. Thus, individuals, regardless of their personal situations or backgrounds, have the possibility to integrate a powerful spiritual process into their lives.

The programs are designed for a balanced development of an individual, to bring a spiritual dimension into one's perception without disturbing the process of one's life. Thus, ordinary people have the possibility to have powerful spiritual experiences while balancing normal family and social situations.

www.ishayoga.org

Inner Engineering Online

Inner Engineering Online is a practical approach to inner transformation in a fast-paced world. The online course designed by Sadhguru presents simple, yet powerful tools for an individual to experience life on a deeper level with more awareness, energy and productivity. It establishes a positive and open approach to life, by improving mental clarity and the ability to handle stressful situations, while generating inner peace and fulfillment. Interpersonal relationships are deepened, cultivating a greater sense of connectivity at home, work and in the community.

Inner Engineering Online is an ideal opportunity for those with time and travel constraints to experience the same profound effects of Isha programs, which have benefited millions of people. Upon completion of the online course, one is eligible to attend a Shambhavi Mahamudra Retreat, which is offered regularly at Isha centers in the United States and other parts of the world.

To LEARN more and SIGN-UP, visit
www.InnerEngineering.com or call 1-877-831-2705

Isha Yoga Center

Isha Yoga Center, founded under the aegis of Isha Foundation, is located on 150 acres of lush land at the foothills of the Velliangiri Mountains that are part of the Nilgiris Biosphere, a reserve forest with abundant wildlife.

Created as a powerful *sthana* (a center for inner growth), this popular destination attracts people from all parts of the world. It is unique in its offering of all aspects of yoga - gnana (knowledge), karma (action), kriya (energy), and bhakti (devotion) and revives the Guru-shishya paramparya (the traditional method of knowledge transfer from Master to disciple).

Isha Yoga Center provides a supportive environment for people to shift to healthier lifestyles, improve interpersonal relationships, seek a higher level of self-fulfillment, and realize their full potential.

The Center is located 30 km west of Coimbatore, a major industrial city in South India which is well connected by air, rail, and road. All major national airlines operate regular flights into Coimbatore from Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore. Train services are available from all major cities in India. Regular bus and taxi services are also available from Coimbatore to the Center.

Visitors are advised to contact the Center for availability and reservation of accommodation well in advance, as it is generally heavily booked.

Dhyanalinga

The Dhyanalinga is a powerful and unique energy form created by Sadhguru from the essence of yogic sciences. Situated at the Isha Yoga Center, it is the first of its kind to be completed in over 2000 years. The Dhyanalinga is a meditative space that does not ascribe to any particular faith or belief system nor does it require any ritual, prayer, or worship.

The Dhyanalinga was consecrated by Sadhguru after three years of an intense process of prana pratishtha. Housed within an architecturally striking pillarless dome structure, the Dhyanalinga's energies allow even those unaware of meditation to experience a deep state of meditativeness, revealing the essential nature of life.

A special feature of the Dhyanalinga complex are the Theerthakunds - consecrated subterranean water bodies, energized by rasalingas. A dip in these vibrant pools significantly enhances one’s spiritual receptivity and is a good preparation to receive the Grace of the Dhyanalinga. The waters of the Theerthakunds also rejuvenate the body, and bring health and wellbeing.

The Dhyanalinga draws many thousands of people every week, who converge to experience a deep sense of inner peace.

www.dhyanalinga.org

Institute of Inner-sciences (iii)

Nestled on a breathtaking mountain top in the beautiful Cumberland Plateau of Tennessee, Isha Institute of Inner-sciences (iii) is established as an infrastructure for raising human consciousness – fostering global harmony through individual transformation.

The Institute offers a variety of programs that provide methods for anyone to attain physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. It is a unique space created for human beings to deepen their experience of life, and to reach their ultimate potential.

Founded and guided by Sadhguru – a yogi, profound mystic, and humanitarian – Isha Institute of Inner-sciences will remain an essential resource for seekers wishing to explore the ancient science of yoga in all its depth and

dimensions for many generations to come. Isha Institute of Inner-sciences is open 365 days a year and welcomes visitors from all walks of life.

www.ishausa.org

Isha Kriya

Isha Kriya™ is a simple yet potent practice rooted in the timeless wisdom of the yogic sciences. “Isha” refers to that which is the source of creation; “kriya” literally means “internal action.” The purpose of Isha Kriya is to help an individual get in touch with the source of his existence, to create life according to his own wish and vision.

Through Isha Kriya, a 12-minute practice, an individual can pursue immediate and ultimate wellbeing, experiencing success in the social sphere, while nourishing the inner longing for the deeper dimensions of life. Isha Kriya empowers an individual towards a stress-free way of being, and promotes enhanced clarity, heightened energy levels, and a state of peacefulness and joy. Daily practice of Isha Kriya brings health, dynamism and happiness. It is a powerful tool to cope with the hectic pace of modern life.

Isha Kriya requires no special physical agility or previous experience of yoga to practice. It integrates seamlessly into one’s daily life, bringing the possibilities of a spiritual process – which were once available only to yogis and ascetics – to every human being in the comfort of their own home. Created by Sadhguru, it has the potential to transform the life of anyone who is willing to invest just a few minutes a day. The instructions for Isha Kriya are given below.

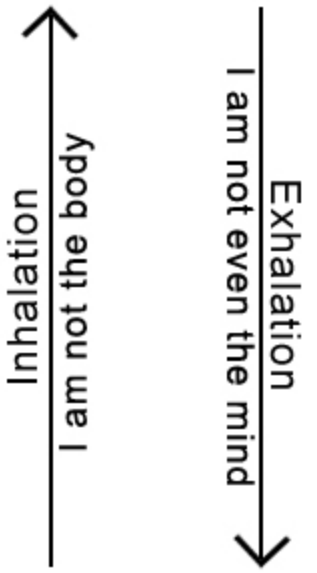
You can also watch the Isha Kriya instruction video.

PREPARATION

Sit facing east in a cross-legged posture, with your spine comfortably erect.

Keep your hands upon your thighs, with your palms facing up.

With your face slightly upturned, eyes closed, keep a mild focus between your eyebrows.



The breathing should be as shown in this diagram

THE MEDITATION

This meditation happens in three stages:

STAGE 1

Inhale and exhale gently, slowly.

With each inhalation, mentally say to yourself: **"I am not the body."** The inhalation should last the whole duration of that thought.

With each exhalation, mentally say to yourself: **"I am not even the mind."** The exhalation should last for the whole duration of that thought.

Repeat this for 7 to 11 minutes.

STAGE 2

Utter a long "A" sound (as the "a" in father). The sound should come from just below the navel. You need not utter it very loud, but loud enough to feel the vibration.

Utter the long "A" sound 7 times, exhaling fully into each sound.

STAGE 3

Sit for 5 to 6 minutes with a slightly upturned face, and keep a mild focus between your eyebrows.

The total time of this practice is between 12 to 18 min. You can sit longer if you want.

PLEASE NOTE

While you sit for the Isha Kriya, do not pay attention to the activity of the mind or body. Whatever is happening in your body or your mind, just ignore it and simply sit there.

Do not take a break in between, as it will disturb the reorganization of energies that happens during the practice.

Each time you do the *kriya*, you must do it for a minimum of 12 minutes, and twice a day for 48 days (considered as a full *mandala* or cycle), or once a day for 90 days. This is your commitment. This is your *Gurudakshina* (A traditional offering to a Guru or Spiritual Master).

Anyone can practice this kriya and enjoy its benefits. Simply follow the instructions without making any changes. This is a simple but very potent kriya.

You can remind yourself that "I am not the body. I am not even the mind" anytime during the day.

Questioner: What can I possibly gain out of this?

Sadhguru: Where is the need to meditate, first of all? Starting the process of life was not your conscious choice, it "happened" to you. When you were born your body was so small, and now it has grown. So obviously, the body is something that you gathered. It is an accumulation. What you call as "my body" is an accumulation of food. Similarly, what you call as "my mind" is an accumulation of impressions.

Whatever you accumulate can be yours, but it can never be you. The very fact you accumulated it means that you gathered it from somewhere else. Today you could gather a

70 kg body, but you can decide to make it a 60 kg body. You don’t go looking for those 10 kgs, because they were an accumulation. Once you drop it, it is gone. Similarly, with your mind, it is an accumulation of impressions.

The moment you are identified in your experience, the moment you are identified with something that you are not, your perception goes completely haywire. You cannot perceive life the way it is; your perception is hugely distorted. So the moment you start experiencing this body, which you gathered from outside, as "myself," the moment you start experiencing the impressions that you have in your mind as "myself," you cannot perceive life the way it is. You will only perceive life the way it is necessary for your survival, and not the way it really is.

Yet once you have come as a human being, survival is very important, but it is not enough. If you had come here like any other creature on this planet, stomach full - life would be settled. But once you come here as a human being, life does not end with survival. Actually, for a human being, life begins only after survival is fulfilled.

So meditation gives you an experience, an inner state where what is you and what is yours is separated. There is a little distance, there is a little space between what is you and what you have accumulated. For now we can understand this as meditation.

What is the use of doing this? It brings an absolute clarity of perception. You see life just the way it is. No distortions about it; simply seeing life just the way it is.

Right now if we see this very hall as a world, your ability to go through this world is only to the extent that you clearly see it. If I have no clarity of vision but if I have confidence and if I try to go through this, I'm going to be a bumbling idiot. Whenever there is no perception, people try to overcome that by building confidence in them. Without the clarity of perception people are trying to make it up with other kinds of substitutes; there is no substitute for clarity.

Once you understand this you naturally become meditative; you want to clear up everything and just look at life the way it is, because you want to walk through life with least amount of friction, without stumbling on this or that.

Questioner: Why should my head be slightly upturned?

Sadhguru: Sitting with your head slightly upturned is not because you want to see something floating in the sky or imagine something. You keep your head upturned because when your system "looks" upward it becomes receptive. It is like opening a window. This is about becoming receptive to Grace. When you become willing and receptive, your body naturally arches up.

Questioner: What does this meditation do?

Sadhguru: This Kriya will create a certain space between you and your body, between you and your mind. If at all there is any struggle in your life, it is because you identify yourself with these limited aspects of yourself.

So the essence of meditation is that it creates a space, a distance between you and what you refer to as your "mind." All the suffering you go through is manufactured in your mind, isn't it so? If you distance yourself from the mind, can there be suffering in you? This is the end of suffering.

Now while you are meditating, there is a distance between you and your mind, and you do feel peaceful. The problem is that the moment you open your eyes, you are again stuck with your mind.

If you meditate every day, a day will come when you open your eyes, and you can still experience that the mind is there and you are here. This is the end of suffering. When you are no longer identified with your body and mind, you will be in touch with the source of Creation within you. Once this happens, Grace happens.

Whether you are here, or beyond, this is the end of suffering. That means your whole karmic bag - your past, or your unconscious mind - has been kept aside. It cannot have any influence over you. Once the past has no influence over you, then life becomes a huge potential. Every breath becomes such a tremendous possibility in your life, because the past is not playing any role in your existence here now. If you sit here, you are absolute life. Life becomes effortless.

Questioner: What is the importance of the breath? Is there more to breathing well than being healthy?

Sadhguru: Breath is the thread which ties you to the body. If I take away your breath, your body will fall apart. It is the breath that has tied you to the body. What you call as your body and what you call as "me" have been tied together with breath. And this breath decides many aspects of who you are right now. For different levels of thought and emotion that you go through, your breath takes on different types of patterns. If you are angry you will be breathing one way. You are peaceful, you breathe another way. You are happy, you breathe another way. You are sad, you will breathe another way. Have you noticed this?

Based on this conversely is the science of pranayama and kriya: by consciously breathing in a particular way, the very way you think, feel, understand and experience life can be changed.

This breath can be used in so many ways as a tool to do other things with the body and the mind. You will see with the Isha Kriya, we are using a simple process of breath, but the kriya itself is not in the breath. Breath is just a tool. Breath is an induction, but what happens is not about the breath.

Whichever way you breathe, that is the way you think. Whichever way you think, that is the way you breathe. Your whole life, your whole unconscious mind is written into your breath. If you just read your breath, your past, present and future is written there, in the way you breathe.

Once you realize this, life becomes very different. It needs to be known experientially; it is not something you can propound like this. If you know the bliss of simply sitting here, the blissfulness of just being able to simply sit here, not think anything, not do anything, simply sit here, just being life, then life would be very different.

In a way, what this means is today there is scientific proof that without taking a drop of alcohol, without taking any substance you can simply sit here and get drugged or stoned or drunk by yourself. If you are aware in a certain way, you can activate the system in such a way that if you sit here it is an enormous pleasure. Once simply sitting and breathing is such a great pleasure, you will become very

genial, flexible, wonderful because all the time you are in a great state within yourself. No hangover. Mind becomes sharper than ever before.

Questioner: What effect does uttering the sound "Aaa" have on me?

Sadhguru: When you utter the sound "Aaa," the maintenance center in your body gets activated. This is *Manipuraka chakra,* or the navel center. Manipuraka is just three-fourths of an inch below your navel. When you were in your mother's womb, the "maintenance" pipe was connected there. Now the tube is gone, but the maintenance center is still in your navel.

Now as there is a physical body, there is a whole energy body that we generally refer to as either prana or *shakti*. This energy, or prana, flows through the body in certain established patterns; it is not moving randomly. There are 72,000 different ways in which it moves. In other words, there are 72,000 pathways in the system through which it is flowing. So *nadis* are pathways or channels in the system. They do not have a physical manifestation; if you cut the body and look inside, you will not find these nadis. But as you become more and more aware, you will notice the energy is not moving at random, it is moving in established pathways.

When you utter the sound "Aaa," you will see the reverberation will start about three-fourths of an inch below the navel and spread right across the body. Sound "Aaa" is the only reverberation which spreads right across the body because this is the only place where the 72,000 nadis meet and redistribute themselves. They all meet at Manipuraka and redistribute themselves. This is the only point in the body like that. If you utter the sound "Aaa," the

reverberations of this sound are carried right across the system.

This reverberation can assist greatly in energizing your maintenance center. Activating this center will bring health, dynamism, prosperity and wellbeing.

Worldwide Centers

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